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# How to Study Shakespeare

With Articles *on* General Literature *and*  
Directions *for* Forming *and*  
Conducting Study  
Circles

*By*

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

HENRY VAN DYCK

FRANCIS HOVEY STODDARD

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

C. ALPHONZO SMITH

LADIAN ABBOTT

CHARLES F. RICHARDSON

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

AND OTHERS

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NEW YORK  
THE UNIVERSITY SOCIETY Inc.

1907







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## HOW TO STUDY SHAKESPEARE

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### How to Study Shakespeare

By HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

"You might read all the books in the British Museum, if you could live long enough, and remain an entirely illiterate, uneducated person. But if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter—that is to say, with real accuracy—you are forevermore, in some measure, an educated person."—RUSKIN.

IT is one thing to read and another thing to study; and yet reading is the chief means and the best method of study when one is trying to understand a writer or a piece of literature. The lover of Shakespeare begins by reading the plays for pure pleasure and ends by reading them for greater pleasure. In the meantime, he may, so to speak, have taken them to pieces, examined their construction, looked at the words in which they are written with a microscope, traced their historical connections, gone back to their sources. In doing this work of analysis—for it is necessary to take a thing to pieces in order to find out how it is put together—he may become so much interested in the detail of the work that he loses sight of Shakespeare altogether and becomes a student of language, grammar, the structure of style, the evolution of the drama. This is what sometimes happens to the scholar; in studying what may be called the mechanics of a work of art he loses sight of the art itself. To such a student the plays of Shakespeare become a quarry out of which great masses of knowledge may be taken. This is the study of Shakespeare's language, methods, con-



struction; but it is not the study of Shakespeare; and it is with the study of Shakespeare that this paper concerns itself.

The best approach to a great book is by the way of simple enjoyment. If I am to see the Sistine Madonna for the first time I wish, above all things, to give myself up to the pure delight of looking at the most beautiful picture ever painted by man; I wish to surrender myself to the great painter and let his thought, expressed on the canvas, sink clear and deep into my spirit. I wish to keep myself out of sight; to postpone analysis, minute study of detail, the critical attitude. First and foremost I want to hear what Raphael has to say, and I can best do that by keeping silent myself. After I have heard him I can argue with him, criticise him, condemn him if I choose; but I must first hear him to the end and without interruption.

In like manner, if I wish to know Shakespeare, I must give him a full, free opportunity of telling me what he thinks of life, how he understands it, what it means as its workings are revealed in the careers of men and women; and if I am to get any impression of his way of telling his story I must surrender myself to him and let him do what he can with me. These are the first things I must do; and, if I care more for the substance of things than for their peculiarities of structure, more for the truth they have to impart than for the order of words in which they impart that truth, more for the living spirit than for the skeleton in which it is lodged, these are the things to which I shall come back when I have taken the plays to pieces and examined their mechanism with a microscope. The end of art is to deepen the sense of life and to give delight and exhilaration; any kind of study which secures these results is good; all kinds which miss them are bad.

To begin with, then, the student of Shakespeare is to remember that he is dealing with a great human spirit and not with a mass of literary material; that he is never to lose the feeling of reverence which such a spirit inspires; that *he is handling human documents* and not the stuff of which *grammars and rhetorics* are made. To keep the mind open,

the heart tender, the imagination responsive: these are the prime qualities in our friendships for one another, and they are the prime qualities in our friendships with the great writers.

This vital study, for the man who wishes to know Shakespeare and does not expect to gain an expert's knowledge of Shakespeare's works, is a very simple matter. All fundamental ways of dealing with the great realities are simple; it is the tricks of manner, the skill with small details, which are abstruse and obscure. To know Shakespeare one needs, first of all, a good edition of his works; this means a well-printed and well-bound set of his plays and poems, of a size that is easy and comfortable to the hand. There are several editions of small size, but printed from large, clear type, which have the advantage of fitting into a pocket without discomfort. If one has little, or even a great deal of time at command it is a matter of prime importance to keep Shakespeare within reach; to be able to put ten or twenty minutes into reading "Hamlet" or "The Tempest" on a train, in a cable car, or while one is waiting at a station. Many men have educated themselves by using the odds and ends of time which most people waste because they have never learned what Mr. Gladstone called "thrift of time."

Having become the possessor of a good edition of the works, read them through as you would read a novel, giving yourself up to the interest of the story. People forget that many of the plays were suggested to Shakespeare by the stories of his time and of earlier times, and that every one of them is a condensed novel. If Shakespeare were not placed so high on the shelves as a great classic it is probable that more people would read him for simple entertainment; for he is one of the most interesting writers in the world. Many of the plays carry the reader along without any effort on his part; just as "The Mill on the Floss," "Vanity Fair," "The Tale of Two Cities," and "The Scarlet Letter" carry him along. Many men have gained their most vivid impressions of English history from the historical plays, and at least one English statesman has not hesitated

to confess that Shakespeare taught him nearly all the English history he knew.

Read the plays, therefore, and re-read them continually; for after one is familiar with the story one begins to be interested in the people, anxious to understand them and to know why they think, speak, and act as they do. Great books, like the men who make them, are many-sided and cannot be seen at the first glance; one must approach them from different points of view, as one must approach a mountain if one is to have an adequate idea of its size and shape. One must read the plays many times before one hears all they have to say and sees clearly what Shakespeare is trying to do; and as one reads he reads with increasing insight and with more deliberation. He gets first a view of the whole scene which Shakespeare spreads before him, and then he begins to recognize the number and variety of the objects which are grouped together and combined in a whole.

This familiarity is the beginning of intimacy, and so naturally and inevitably leads on to the best and truest knowledge that very little suggestion need be made to the man who has begun to read the plays frequently and regularly because he enjoys them. Have the plays at hand in a convenient form, carry one with you if you are to have any leisure moments, cut down the time you give to newspapers, put aside the miscellaneous books you have been in the habit of reading or are tempted to read, and study your Shakespeare as often and regularly as you can; if you do this Shakespeare will meet you more than half way and reveal himself to you in ways you will not suspect at the start.

You will not need, at the beginning, any elaborate apparatus of books of reference. There are many admirable books about Shakespeare which you may wish to read and to own later, but at the start you will not need them. The best editions of Shakespeare supply all the information essential to the beginner. They contain introductions which tell you when each play was written, where the materials were *found*, how each play is related to the other plays, and convey other information which helps you to understand each

play and put it in its proper place; and they also contain notes which explain historical and other references and allusions, the uses of words, obscure passages, and disputed points. Add to a good edition of the plays Mr. Sidney Lee's biography, a concordance of the plays, Professor Dowden's "Shakespeare's Mind and Art," and read the essays on Shakespeare by Coleridge, Lowell, Bagehot, and other standard writers, whose works you will find in the libraries, and you have all the machinery of study you need. Read, in addition, the history of Shakespeare's age in English history as it is told in Green's "History of the English People."

The time will probably come when you will desire a closer intimacy with the dramatist who has so broadened your knowledge of human nature. It will be stimulating, too, with one or more friends who are of your mind, to begin a more systematic study, which need not demand too much time. There are a number of excellent manuals which present suggestions for careful and thorough study of the plays.

The following "Suggestions for Study" are taken from the programme of a literary society in New York City, and may serve as one example of the kind of guidance needed by students in the earlier stages of Shakespearean study. This society devoted a number of evenings to the play of "Macbeth," and to the special consideration of "The Nature of Poetry."

### THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

Suggestions for Study: Read the whole play carefully, then read it a second time. Consider the plot and principal characters. Has it a distinct moral purpose? Has it a historical basis? Sources of plot, and incidents. Reasons why it is a great drama. What is a drama? a tragedy? a comedy? Does "Macbeth" contain genuine and lofty poetry? Which is the strongest passage in the play and why? Name some of the character qualities of Lady Mac-

beth. Are Shakespeare's women inferior to his men? Was Macbeth a poet? What does the knocking at the gate typify? What the sleep-walking scene? The weird sisters; why does Shakespeare make them real, instead of introducing them to Macbeth in a dream? what do they stand for in the play? Who has the more conscience, Macbeth or Lady Macbeth? What utterances or what actions prove it? How do you explain Macbeth's hesitancy before the murder, and his resolute energy and audacity afterward? What is the clew to the great change in the will power of Macbeth?

What is the difference between Lady Macbeth and the two sisters in "King Lear"? In what does Macbeth's punishment consist? What one word contains it all? Was Macbeth a coward? If he was a coward how do you explain his bravery in battle? If he was not a coward, how do you explain his hesitancy and scruples? What broke down Lady Macbeth at the end? Was it the same cause which broke down Macbeth himself? Malcolm and Macduff: were they cowards in fleeing for their lives? Did anything justify Macduff in leaving his family? What is there essentially significant about the play of "Macbeth," more than the obvious truth that "murder will out"? Do you regard this as Shakespeare's greatest tragedy? If so, why? What elements determine the greatness of a play?

Required Reading: "Macbeth."

Suggested Readings: Tennyson's "The Foresters," "Hamlet."

Suggestions for Study: What is poetry? What are the qualities that differentiate it from prose? What is lyric poetry? Are psalms and hymns lyric poetry? What is the meaning of the phrase, "Lyric beauty in Shakespeare's plays"? Describe "epic," "lyric," and "dramatic" poetry. Define the words "ode," "sonnet," and "elegy." Is Shakespeare the greatest English dramatist? Define the *essential qualities* of a great drama. Can love of poetry *and other literature* be acquired? Elements of great poetry; *originality; charm; great subjects greatly treated; correct*

poetic construction; vital ideas coherently worked out must quicken the emotions. Beauty of simple poetry in "Dora" and Book of Ruth. No metaphor, figure of speech, or decorative adjective in "Dora." The meaning of iambic pentameter, dactylic hexameter, etc. What is "Society Verse"? Is there such a thing as "American" poetry? Characteristics of the poetry of the nineteenth century. The spiritual element in poetry. Contemporary and universal interest in poetry. Literature of knowledge and literature of power; define each. The Bible in Tennyson and other poets. Study a poem as a whole, its plan, story, plot, vital idea, and larger teaching; note the meaning of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, and the use of words.

Suggested Readings: A selection of the best short poems in the English language. Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman's "The Nature of Poetry."

The following example is by Samuel Thurber, Girls' High School, Boston, and is taken from Prof. Homer Sprague's edition of the "Merchant of Venice."

Every good teacher will have methods of his own; but the following suggestions, or some of them, may be of practical value to most instructors:

The poem should be read very hastily, at first, for the outline of the story or course of thought.

Having thus grasped it as a whole, it should again be read through; this time with some care for the details of the story and course of thought.

Then the thorough study of each and every part should be begun.

At the beginning of the class exercise, or as often as needful, require of the pupil a statement of—(a) The main object of the author in the whole poem, oration, play, or other production of which to-day's lesson is a part. (b) The object of the author in this particular canto, chapter, act, or other division or subdivision of the main work.

Read or recite from memory (or have the pupils do it) the finest part or parts of the last lesson. The elocutionary

talent of the class should be utilized here, in order that the author may appear at his best.

Require at times (often enough to keep the whole fresh in memory) a *résumé* of the "argument," story, or succession of topics, up to the present lesson.

Have the student read aloud the sentence, paragraph, or lines, now (or previously) assigned. The appointed portion should have some unity.

Let the student interpret exactly the meaning by substituting his own words; explain peculiarities. This translation or paraphrase should often be in writing.

Let him state the immediate object of the author in these lines. Is this object relevant? important? appropriate in this place?

Let him point out the ingredients (particular thoughts) that make up the passage. Are they in good taste? just? natural? well arranged?

Let him point out other merits or defects—anything noteworthy as regards nobleness of principle or sentiment, grace, delicacy, beauty, rhythm, sublimity, wit, wisdom, humor, *naïveté*, kindliness, pathos, energy, concentrated truth, logical force, originality; give allusions, kindred passages, principles illustrated, etc.

From "Shakespeariana" for January, 1887, we take the following character analysis by M. W. Smith:

Antonio. His intellect. Adapted to business, I, i. Prudence blinded by affection, I, i. Deceived by Shylock's hypocrisy, I, iii; Practically philosophical, IV, i. His moral nature. Generous, III, iii; Good, III, i; Affectionate, I, i; II, viii; III, ii, iii, iv; IV, i; Sincere, II, viii; Frank, I, iii; Magnanimous, III, ii; Honest, III, i; Opposed to usury, I, iii; Melancholy, I, i; IV, i; Patient and resigned, IV, i.

Bassanio. His intellect. Philosophical, III, ii; Good executive ability, II, ii; Forethought, II, ii; Easily deceived by Shylock, I, iii; A scholar, I, ii. His moral nature. Too proud to economize, I, i; Trusts to luck, I, i; Takes advantage of friendship, I, i; Frank, II, ii; III,

ii; Energetic, II, ii; Good at making promises, III, ii; IV, i; V, i; Knows how to flatter, V, i; Generous, IV, i; Grateful, V, i; Undemonstrative, III, ii.

Portia. Her personal appearance. In general, I, i; II, viii; III, ii; Stature, I, ii; Color of hair, I, i; III, ii. Her intellect. Philosophical, I, ii; II, ix; IV, i; V, i; Shrewd in reading character, I, ii; Practical, III, ii; Satirical, I, ii; II, ix; Humorous, II, ix; IV, ii; V, i; Has good common sense, III, ii; Intellect predominates, III, ii. Her moral nature. In general, I, i; Extremely obedient, III, ii; Frank and unaffected, III, ii; Generally hospitable, III, ii; V, i; Generous, III, ii; Undemonstrative, V, i; Has faith in good luck, III, ii; Can equivocate, II, i; Somewhat vain, V, i; Somewhat silly, III, iv.

Shylock. His intellect. Philosophical, III, i; IV, i; Logical, IV, i; Cool-headed, IV, i; Sharp in business, I, iii; Quick at repartee, II, v; IV, i. His moral nature. True to his religion, I, iii; IV, i; Patient under persecution, I, iii; Sensitive to wrong, I, iii; III, i; Superstitious, II, v; Untruthful, I, iii; Ironical, I, iii; Miserly, II, ii; V, viii; Extremely avaricious, III, i; IV, i; A good hater, I, iii; II, viii; IV, i; Revengeful, I, iii; III, i; II, iii; Malicious, IV, i; Pitiless, IV, i; Relentless, IV, i; Heartless, III, iii; IV, i.—Verify!

The writer just quoted suggests the following questions to evoke criticism: How could Antonio so love a man? Is not going to Shylock to borrow money a defect in Shakespeare's art? Would Shylock make such a confession to Antonio (as in Act I, sc. iii)? Why is the episode of Lorenzo and Jessica introduced? Did Jessica give this ducat for the sake of friendship, II, iii? Is this natural, II, iii, 14-17? Did Shylock contrive against Antonio's life? Why did not Shylock manifest this exultation after line 33 in scene i of the third act, III, i, 83-89? Does Portia do most of the love-making? Was the bond a legal one? Does the bond say "nearest his heart"? What is the connection between Bassanio and Gratiano, II, ii; III, ii? Why do we believe that Antonio will not be hurt, and that



Shylock will be defeated in his purpose, III, i? Is Portia correct in her estimate of Antonio, III, iv? Does the likeness between persons tend to promote friendship? Would Shylock make such a statement in court as in IV, i, about hating Antonio? Could Portia so completely disguise herself, IV, i? Is not her decision purely technical, IV, i, 297, etc.? Would Shylock say this [the expression of acquiescence, IV, i, 385, etc.] to save his life? Did Portia have large hands, IV, i, 417, etc.? Why is scene ii, Act IV, introduced? Why is Act V usually omitted on the stage?

## HOW TO STUDY SHAKESPEARE

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### Why Young Men Should Study Shakespeare

By C. ALPHONSO SMITH

FOR a Knowledge of History. "Men differ from the lower animals, in part," says Professor C. C. Everett, in his "Ethics for Young People," "because whatever one generation gains is passed on to the next, so that each starts with some little advantage over the one that went before it." But we do not inherit this knowledge; we are not born "heirs of all the ages." Every young man or woman who wishes to get the advantage of the generations that have gone before and make a fair start with the one that is just beginning must study history; for history, in the largest sense, is the record of what the race has thought and done. And in the realm of history, as both teacher and interpreter, it would be hard to overestimate the influence of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's historical dramas give history in so vital and attractive a form that for many readers they have usurped the place of text-books of history. Walter Scott, the founder of the historical novel, did little more than carry on the work begun by Shakespeare, that of popularizing the great characters and the leading events of history. So vivid is the dramatist's portrayal that the names of Cæsar, Brutus, Antony, Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Troilus, Cressida, and others are inseparably linked with the name of Shakespeare.

But in the domain of English history our debt to Shakespeare is still greater. "All the English history that I know," said the Duke of Marlborough, "I learned from Shakespeare." In Shakespeare's day, Warwickshire, in whose borders the decisive battles of the Wars of the Roses had been fought, was a storehouse of history and legend. A wealth of material had been handed down by oral tradition. The battle of Bosworth Field was fought only eighty years before Shakespeare's birth. Thus the history that he narrates is the history that he must have heard recounted in his youth and early manhood.

This gives a peculiar value to Shakespeare's English historical plays, a value that historians are just beginning to appreciate. In the preface to "The Houses of York and Lancaster," Mr. James Gairdner says: "For this period of English history we are fortunate in possessing an unrivaled interpreter in our great dramatic poet Shakespeare. Following the guidance of such a master-mind, we realize for ourselves the men and actions of the period in a way we cannot do in any other epoch. . . . The doings of that stormy age, the sad calamities endured by kings, the sudden changes of fortune endured by great men, the glitter of chivalry, and the horrors of civil war, all left a deep impression upon the mind of the nation, which was kept alive by vivid traditions of the past *at the time that our great dramatist wrote.*"

Shakespeare's nearness, therefore, in time and place to the events that he records—to say nothing of his unrivaled powers of insight and presentation—not only gives him an advantage over modern historians, but makes him a peculiarly fitting guide for those who are just entering upon the serious study of English history.

For Maxims of Conduct. "Three-fourths of our daily thought," says Matthew Arnold, "is devoted to questions of conduct. In the case of the young, in whom conduct has not yet crystallized into matured and unconscious habit, *the proportion would be nearer four-fifths.*"

*To realize the influence of Shakespeare in the direction*

of conduct and in the formation of character one needs only to remember that as an English classic Shakespeare ranks next to the Bible, Shakespeare and the Bible having long since become a current phrase. And one has only to glance over a book of Shakespeare quotations, noting the number and familiarity of those that interpret or enforce conduct, to see that there is sound basis for the popular grouping of Shakespeare with so authoritative a book of conduct as the English Bible.

As a guide in conduct Shakespeare is quoted consciously and unconsciously by learned and unlearned alike, for his dramas are essentially studies in conduct. In these dramas personal responsibility is never merged or abjured; a man remains the architect of his own fortunes. The ghosts, dreams, and witches occasionally employed by Shakespeare do not compel conduct; they only illustrate it. Hamlet suspected his uncle before the appearance of his father's spirit; Clarence's dream was but the confession of guilt; Macbeth was a murderer at heart before he became a prey to "supernatural soliciting."

When Cassius says,

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings,"

he touches upon one of the central differences between the Greek drama and the Elizabethan drama; he suggests also the chief reason why Shakespeare has furnished so many more maxims of conduct than Æschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides. The Greek dramatists portrayed man as evil-starred or fortune-starred at birth; he was a mere puppet in the hands of fate. With wider vision and clearer insight Shakespeare puts the emphasis not on fate or destiny but on character and conduct; not only crimes but venial sins, mere errors of judgment, carry within them the seeds of their own punishment. It is this fruitful and essentially ethical point of view that has stored Shakespeare's pages with maxims of daily conduct. It is this that invests his characters with so vital a significance for all those who are

reaching up into maturity, and who, beginning to feel the possibilities of life, wish to probe deeper into its meaning and to know the principles of its right conduct.

For a Better Knowledge of Human Nature. "All the world's a stage," says Shakespeare, and of the men and women who play their parts upon it he has not merely sketched, but completely individualized two hundred and forty-six. In mere number Balzac surpasses Shakespeare; but when we consider not only the gross number but the variety of types and the clearness and fullness with which they are portrayed, Shakespeare takes easy supremacy over all other writers, ancient and modern. George Eliot has individualized one hundred and seven characters, Dickens one hundred and two, and Thackeray forty, their sum total being hardly more than equal to Shakespeare's single output.

It is a mere truism to say that no one may hope for success in any calling to-day without a knowledge of human nature. In many vocations—and these the highest—success is not only conditioned on, but proportioned, to an insight into character. No one can expect to become a successful preacher, teacher, doctor, editor, lawyer, or business man, who does not have a keen appreciation of the motives that govern men in the ordinary affairs of life. Knowledge in this domain is power and influence, while ignorance is weakness and inefficiency.

The knowledge of human nature that a young man or woman has gained from experience and observation may be good as far as it goes; but it is neither wide enough nor deep enough, and is purchased in many cases by needless errors and heartaches. "The essence of provincialism," says Mr. Mabie, in "Books and Culture," "is a substitution of a part for the whole; the acceptance of the local experience, knowledge, and standards as possessing the authority of the universal experience, knowledge, and standards; the local experience is entirely true in its own sphere; it becomes misleading when it is accepted as the experience *of all time and all men.*"

For a knowledge of men and women as deep as it is wide, for insight into social life as well as individual life, for appreciation of the depths to which an over-tempted nature may descend or the heights to which, in spite of hostile environment, a determined spirit may rise—Shakespeare remains our supreme teacher. There is no text-book of human nature taught in our schools or colleges; such a text-book may be found in Shakespeare. Three centuries have served only to accentuate his preëminence and to enhance his authority as a guide through the mazes and inconsistencies of our common nature.

For Training in Expression. It would seem at first glance as if blank verse written three hundred years ago could help but little to-day in training one to speak and write clear and forceful prose. While it is true that Macaulay, Hawthorne, and Kipling, for example, furnish something not found in Shakespeare, it is also true that Shakespeare furnishes still more that is not found in them.

The art of composition is to see clearly and to see whole. Whatever be the theme, if the writer or speaker has first *individualized* it, his words will be clear and apt; if he has then viewed it *in its relations*, whether these be the relations of similarity or contrast, of mere analogy or illustration, his treatment will be vital and impressive. In these two respects, the ability to see clearly and to see whole, Shakespeare is as yet unrivaled.

Every character that he has portrayed, every plot that he has employed, every incident narrated, every scene described, and every sentence constructed shows that the great dramatist had seen before he wrote. He had so communed with his characters and so thought through his plots that he knew the very lineaments of the one and every possible unfolding of the other. Shakespeare's work may have been done quickly; it could not have been done hastily. Thought and emotion were held in solution until they precipitated in sharp and definite outline. In spite of obsolete words and idioms, his style is a model of clearness and vividness; it is a series of pictures the study of which is a liberal education

in that clearness and directness of vision which must precede any attempt at clearness of presentation.

But clearness is not enough. Euclid and Blackstone are as clear as Shakespeare. What is the secret of Shakespeare's wealth of illustration, analogy, and contrast? May the secret be learned? The principle at least may be learned; it is the principle followed by every writer or speaker who has touched the heart and imagination. Shakespeare not only visualized his characters and incidents as units in themselves, he saw them as organic parts of a larger whole. To see a thing in its entirety one must see it in its relations to other things. Every illustration employed by a writer or speaker—whether it be drawn from nature, art, history, or experience—is the statement of a suggested relationship and is prompted by this faculty of seeing things in their connections.

To see clearly one must see individually; to see as a whole one must see collectively. Both faculties may be greatly increased by training; the first demands more of the intellect, the second of the imagination; the one separates, the other combines; the one may be compared to a straight line, the other to a surface. And in both, Shakespeare offers to young and old alike an inexhaustible store of material for study and practice. At his touch the abstract becomes concrete, the ideal real, the remote near, the shadowy substantial, the invisible visible. To appreciate his style at the very outset of one's career, before vague and ineffective methods of expression have become ingrained, is to drink at a source of unfailing pleasure and of increasing power.

For Culture. "Culture implies growth. It is the unfolding of the mind and heart that comes from contact with what is best and highest. It means enrichment of character and emancipation from what is low and provincial. No one, especially if in the impressionable years of early manhood or womanhood, can commune with Shakespeare's characters or *think Shakespeare's* thoughts after him without receiving *an access of culture*. Intellect, imagination, and sympathy

are enlarged. The limitations of time and space cease to be felt. The reader shares in the fullness of universal truth; he feels afresh the depth of Shakespeare's remark that—

"All places that the eye of Heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens";

he assimilates the wit and wisdom and beauty of a race that was already "in the foremost files of time" when Shakespeare became its spokesman; he sees new meanings in life, feels a new awe in its mysteries, a new depth even in its homelier aspects, and a new stimulus in its possibilities. Old things seem new to him by the novelty of their presentation, and new things seem old because of the force and directness with which they are brought home to his consciousness. Insensibly he ceases to admire what is crude, shallow, fragmentary, and inartistic; and grows into appreciation of what is true, vital, whole, and harmonious. He is made to realize that life is more than thought, and that sympathy and imagination have a depth and richness beyond the reach of intellect and learning.

But culture is not only growth through ideas and feelings; it is growth through will and service. Shakespeare portrays men not in isolated but in close relation to the society about them. He viewed them, as we have seen, not only as individuals, but as social factors. The most fruitful lesson to be learned from Shakespeare is culture as social service, a lesson incomparably phrased in the dramatist's own words:

"Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched  
But to fine issues."



## HOW TO READ

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### On Readers and Books

By HENRY VAN DYKE

THERE are readers and readers. For purposes of convenience they may be divided into three classes.

First, there is the "simple reader"—the ordinary book-consumer of commerce. He reads without any particular purpose or intention, chiefly in order to occupy his spare time. He has formed the habit and it pleases him. He does not know much about literature, but he says he knows what he likes. All is fish that comes to his net. Curiosity and fashion play a large part in directing his reading. He is an easy prey for the loud-advertising bookseller. He seldom reads a book the second time, except when he forgets that he has read it before. For a reader in this stage of evolution the most valuable advice (if, indeed, any counsel may be effectual) is chiefly of a negative character. Do not read vulgar books, silly books, morbid books. Do not read books that are written in bad English. Do not read books simply because other people are reading them. Do not read more than five new books to one old one.

Next comes the "intelligent reader"—the person who wants to know, and to whom books are valuable chiefly for the accuracy of the information which they convey. He reads with the definite purpose of increasing his acquaintance with facts. Memory is his most valuable faculty. He is *ardent in the following of certain lines of investigation; he is apt to have a specialty, and to think highly of its impor-*

tance. He is inclined to take notes and to make analyses. This particular reader is the one to whom lists of books and courses of reading are most useful. Miss Repplier makes light of them as "Cook's Tours in Literature," but the reader whose main interest is the increase of knowledge is often very glad to be "personally conducted" through a new region of books.

Last comes the "gentle reader"—the person who wants to grow, and who turns to books as a means of purifying his tastes, deepening his feelings, broadening his sympathies, and enhancing his joy in life. Literature he loves because it is the most humane of the arts. Its forms and processes interest him as expressions of the human striving towards clearness of thought, purity of emotion, and harmony of action with the ideal. The culture of a finer, fuller manhood is what this reader seeks. He is looking for the books in which the inner meanings of nature and life are translated into language of distinction and charm, touched with the human personality of the author, and embodied in forms of permanent interest and power. This is literature. And the reader who sets his affections on these things enters the world of books as one made free of a city of wonders, a garden of fair delights. He reads not from a sense of duty, not from a constraint of fashion, not from an ambition of learning, but from a thirst of pleasure, because he feels that pleasure of the highest kind—a real joy in the perception of things lucid, luminous, symmetrical, musical, sincere, passionate, and profound—such pleasure restores the heart and quickens it, makes it stronger to endure the ills of life, and more fertile in all good fruits of cheerfulness, courage, and love. This reader for vital pleasure has less need of maps and directories, rules, and instructions, than of companionship. A criticism that will go with him in his reading, and open up new meaning in familiar things, and touch the secrets of beauty and power, and reveal the hidden relations of literature to life, and help him to see the reasonableness of every true grace of style, the sincerity of every real force of passion—a criticism that penetrates, illuminates, and

appreciates, making the eyes clearer and the heart more sensitive to perceive the living spirit in good books—that is the companionship which will be most helpful and most grateful to the gentle reader.

Whichever class of readers we may belong to (and I, for one, decline to commit myself), we can all find something to please and profit us. All can unite in prayers for the simple reader, that he may not spend his last dollar for the 435,999th copy of the newest popular book, but expend his money more wisely in the purchase of—What?

Here is a real difficulty. The variety of opinions among guides and instructors seems to me a most cheerful and encouraging fact. Doubtless each has a good reason to give for his preferences. Doubtless there are treasures to be found in various regions of literature—not a solitary pot of gold hidden in a single field, and a terrible chance that we may not happen to buy the right lot—but veins of rich ore running through all the rocks, and placers in all the gravel beds. Doubtless we may follow any one of a half dozen roads and not go far astray after all.

Let us not take our reading too anxiously, too strenuously. There are more than a hundred good books in the world. The best hundred for you may not be the best hundred for me. We ought to be satisfied if we get something thoroughly good, even though it be not absolutely and unquestionably the best in the world. The habit of worrying about the books that we have not read, destroys the pleasure and diminishes the profit of those that we are reading. Be serious, earnest, sincere in your choice of books, and then put your trust in Providence and read with an easy mind.

Any author who has kept the affection, interest, and confidence of thoughtful, honest readers through at least one generation is fairly sure to have something in him that is worth reading.

Let us keep out of provincialism in literature—even that which comes from Athens.

You like Tolstoi and George Eliot; I like Scott and Thackeray. You like Byron and Shelley; I like Words-

worth and Tennyson. You admire the method of Stubbs and Seignobos; I still find pleasure in Macaulay and Carlyle. Well, probably neither of us is altogether wasting time. Jordan is a good river. But there is also plenty of water in the streams of Abana and Pharpar.

There is a large number of courses of reading that any one of us might take with profit. It is foolish to stand too long hesitating at the cross-roads. Choose your course with open eyes and follow it with a cheerful heart. And take with you a few plain maxims drawn from experience.

Read the preface first. It was probably written last. But the author put it at the beginning because he wanted to say something particular to you before you entered the book. Go in through the front door.

Read plenty of books about people and things, but not too many books about books. Literature is not to be taken in emulsion. The only way to know a great author is to read his works for yourself. That will give you knowledge at first-hand.

Read one book at a time, but never one book alone. Well-worn books always have relatives. Follow them up. Learn something about the family if you want to understand the individual. If you have been reading the "Idylls of the King" go back to Sir Thomas Malory; if you have been keeping company with Stevenson, travel for a while with Scott, Dumas, and Defoe.

Read the old books—those that have stood the test of time. Read them slowly, carefully, thoroughly. They will help you to discriminate among the new ones.

Read no book with which the author has not taken pains enough to write it in a clean, sound, lucid style. Life is short. If he thought so little of his work that he left it in the rough, it is not likely to be worth your pains in reading it.

Read over again the best ten books that you have already read. The result of this experiment will test your taste, measure your advance, and fit you for progress in the art of reading.

## WHY TO READ

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### Hints for People that do not Read

By LYMAN ABBOTT

**Y**OUR time is limited; your books are few. There is work in the kitchen, in the parlor, in the office demanding your attention; clients to be pacified or provoked, patients to be cured or killed, goods to be bought and sold, children to be tended, furniture to be dusted, table to be set and table to be cleared away again; and for a library the family Bible, Webster's Dictionary, the well-thumbed and oft-read books in the sitting room, and the genteel and gilt-edged poetry in the parlor, with a limited purse from which to replenish the exhausted library, and limited time with which to use it if it were replenished. This is no fancy sketch, but a photograph of many an American life. How find time, how find means for study in such circumstances, is the problem of many a would-be student who lays down his intellectual life in despair; who in the first twenty years of his life gets an appetite for learning and in the other forty starves to death. Especially is this true of wives and mothers. How shall a would-be student so situated pursue systematic reading and study?

America gives a library to almost every home, in the periodical publications—the daily journal, the weekly paper, and the monthly magazine. Study the newspaper; if possible, study it with cyclopedia, with atlas, with gazetteer; but study it. Waste no time on the shameful scandals, the bitter political controversies, the ecclesiastical broadsword

exercises, and the idle paragraph gossip. A war of words is no more dignified in a journal than on the street; gossip is no worthier your attention because printed by *the* daily tattler than when whispered by *a* daily tattler. There is no more fascinating intellectual occupation than watching the course of contemporaneous history. The denouements of Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade are nothing to those of life's actual drama. The romance of fiction is inane by the side of the romance of facts, and the newspaper is where they are recorded. In this study the monthly periodical will aid you. The world has never known such storehouses of well-selected mental food as are furnished by the magazines. The ablest writers of America are laid under contribution. The ablest artists are called on to add both the attractions and illuminations of the pencil.

But to the journal—weekly or daily—and the magazine you will want to add some study of books. Periodical reading may become desultory reading. It need not, but there is always danger. For courses of study in books observe three rules:

(1) Begin with what is congenial. Choose not what you *ought* to know but what you *want* to know. It is a rare mind that can keep itself to a course of distasteful study. It is not safe for any one to assume, without proof, that he has a rare mind.

(2) Begin with a short course. Do not lay out, for history, Hume, Macaulay, and Miss Martineau, with the idea that when you have finished these fifteen volumes you will be well versed in English history. That is very true; but you will never finish them. Read Jacob Abbott's "Life of Charles I." or "II.," or Macaulay's Lord Chatham, or Temple, or Thomas Hughes' "Alfred the Great." One thing at a time; and that thing short and simple. Putting the word *done* opposite a purpose is a wonderful incentive to a large achievement in the next attempt.

(3) Buy a dictionary, an atlas, and, if possible, a cyclopedia. If you have not the money make over an old bonnet. No harm will be done if it cultivates a habit of making

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over old bonnets. If a man, dispense with cigars for a year. No harm will be done if this cultivates a habit of dispensing with cigars. If this does not supply the increasing demand for increasing facilities try some other economies. I visited not long since the home of one of the most eminent of America's younger astronomers. He lived in a little box of a house, in an out-of-the-way street, with not an easy-chair in the house. But his wife had a fine piano, and he a microscope that cost him \$300. Equipped with dictionary and atlas, never pass a word the meaning of which you do not know; the name of a place the location of which you have not fixed; or reference to an event which you do not comprehend. In invading a new territory never leave an unconquered garrison behind you.

Theme and tools selected, it still remains to secure time. For the best advantage this should be regular, systematic, uninterrupted. The early hours are the best; when the brain is fresh and the mind alert. To the mind and body trained for it, half an hour before breakfast is worth an hour and a half after supper. But this requires an opportunity to shut out intrusion which perhaps the housekeeper cannot secure; facility to shut out the more subtle intrusion of a thick on-coming crowd of cares, which only a stalwart power of concentration can secure. Some cannot lock the door of the library; others cannot lock the door of the mind. But if time cannot be taken at one hour seize it from another; if it cannot be taken with regularity take it when chance offers. The blacksmith's forge is not a convenient desk; but it was at the blacksmith's forge, blowing the bellows with one hand and holding a book with the other, that Elihu Burritt learned his first languages. The nursery is not the place one would choose for astronomical calculations; but it was in the nursery, beset by her children, whom she never neglected, and interrupted by callers, whom she rarely refused, that Mary Somerville wrought out her "Mechanism of the Heavens," which elected her an honorary member of the *Royal Astronomical Society*, and put her in the first rank of *the scientists of her day*. Where there is a will there is a

way. He or she that can find no time for study has little real heart for it.

The home ought no more to be without a library than without a dining room and kitchen. If you have but one room, and it is lighted by the great wood fire in the flaming fireplace, as Abraham Lincoln's was, do as Abraham Lincoln did; pick out one corner of your fireplace for a library, and use it. Every man ought to provide for the brain as well as for the stomach. This does not require capital; there are cheap editions of the best books; it only requires time and forecast. We write in a private library, and a fairly good one for working purposes, of three thousand and odd volumes; we began it many years ago, on a salary of \$1,000 a year, with five books—a commentary in four volumes and a dictionary. The best libraries are not made; they grow.

In forming a library, if your means are small, do not buy what you can beg or borrow. Depend, as many of the greatest authors have done, on public libraries—the District Library, the Lyceum, the Book Club, the Circulating Library—or on more fortunate friends. Buy only what you cannot borrow.

At first buy only books that you want immediately to read. Do not be deluded into buying books because they are classics, or cheap, or that you may get rid of an agent. One book read is worth a dozen books looked at. No book is possessed till it is read. Reference books constitute an exception, and an important exception, to this rule. These are the foundations of a good library. The essential reference books are a dictionary, a good atlas, and a cyclopedia. Any school atlas will do though, if you are able to purchase it, a good atlas is much better; and best of all is a wise selection of atlases. There is no best cyclopedia; your choice must depend upon your resources, pecuniary and mental.

In purchasing books exercise a choice in editions. The lowest-priced books are not always the cheapest. Buy books of transient interest or minor importance—all novels,



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for example, and current books of travel—in cheap forms. On the other hand, histories, classics of all sorts, and generally all permanent books, should be bought in good binding and good type. It takes well-seasoned lumber to make a good family library.

Have a place for your library. A dollar spent in pine lumber, and a little mechanical skill, will make a larger and better one. Varnished pine is handsome enough for any parlor. A place for books will cry to be filled till it gets its prayer answered. Book shelves preserve books. One shelf of books gathered together is a better library than twice the number scattered from attic to cellar.

Finally, a taste for reading is an essential prerequisite to a useful library. A well is of no use if you never draw water from it. At the same time a good library in the household, accessible to all, from baby to grandmother, is one of the best influences with which to develop a taste for reading. Have no books so fine that they cannot be used.

## HOW TO STUDY

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### Forming a Study Circle

By GEORGE J. BRYAN

IN the multitude of books there is wisdom indeed, but wisdom obscured by their multiplicity. The problem for busy people, eager to increase their acquaintance with literature, is to find out, first, which are the accepted best books, and, second, which are the best books for our particular needs. A general knowledge of the accepted best books is essential if we aspire to the level of culture which marks the man and woman of the world, the standard of what our fathers termed polite society, rather than that of the literary profession.

There are many lists of "best books," each excellent of its kind yet all open to modification from the individual point of view. Peruse them all and it will be found that there are from a hundred down to a select group of twenty or so, which are universally held to be books that are necessary to a well-rounded, rather than a profound, literary culture. Of these a few will, by their own fascination, allure us to use them as life companions. Others will prove so serviceable in various ways that our reading of them will deepen into pleasing study. Again, others will commend themselves as being invaluable as keys to storehouses of inexhaustible treasures of book lore, of character insight, of world knowledge, of profitable entertainment. Each must make his own choice of what are the best books for his individual case, governed by his tastes and circumstances, but he will

scarcely be in a position to decide on the best books for himself until he has fairly read those which the general verdict has pronounced supreme.

Having made our selection comprehensively the questions arise, Where shall I begin? What books shall I read? How shall I read them?

To the young man and young woman these questions are more important than are the transient questions of Imperialism or Municipal Ownership of Franchises. Did you ever ask them? Did you ever receive an intelligent and satisfactory answer? Are you desirous of obtaining light on these subjects? If you are, it will at least prove a very interesting story, and probably a most profitable and helpful exercise, to read the following account of the work done by a Study Circle, on a method designed to give a thorough, if necessarily an incomplete, answer to the above questions.

Intelligent young men and maidens who have finished their school education—clerks, mechanics, stenographers, teachers, publishers, and preachers—often grow weary of the trivialities of ordinary reading and ordinary society, and long for progress in the direction of genuine self-culture and self-improvement. They know that the truest culture comes from wisely reading the best books. But who shall name the best books for them, and who shall show them how to read wisely and well?

The thoughtful young man knows—though he may know it dimly—that there is satisfaction and exhilaration and glory in thinking new and lofty thoughts. He has splendid and inspiring visions of communion, through books, with the master-spirits who have created literature worthy of the name. But he meets with difficulties at the very beginning of his quest. He asks: "What books should I read first, and what next in order?" "How can I acquire a taste for the highest and best kinds of literature?" But the wise and satisfactory answers to these questions are long in coming.

The sensible young woman who reads only the lighter *and the trashier books* knows that she is reading herself *down instead of up*. She knows—or ought to know—that

the trashy literature in which she delights points its votaries in the direction of frivolity of thought, weakness of feeling, and irresoluteness of purpose. In her truer and loftier moments she longs for an acquaintance with those writers who would elevate her taste, inspire the purest and tenderest emotions and confirm good and noble principles.

#### AN OBJECT LESSON IN READING

The Circle referred to is the literary department of the Epworth League in connection with Sumner Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn. A recent Syllabus contains features that invite the attention of persons contemplating a systematic study of general or special literature. It is quoted liberally here as showing the actual working of a plan which has been exceptionally successful in its practical results and in holding the interest of its members. The conductors of the department announce their intention to answer the questions stated above.

"We have selected a series of good novels, essays, and poems for study. We have tried to illustrate, by suggestions and questions, correct methods of reading. We earnestly desire to assist you in an effort to secure self-culture through the judicious reading of good books. We trust that these studies may help you to find more pleasure in literature—to discover more than ever before that it gives strength to the mind and truth to the heart.

"The Syllabus and the accompanying description provide a plan for the formation of circles or societies, the object of which shall be to begin and pursue the serious study of literature, its nature and significance in human life and education. It is distinct from any of the courses of study now used in church 'young peoples' societies' or 'leagues.' It may be used either to supplement or to supersede them. Its object is the study of pure and genuine literature, not the study of science or history, except as they are related to literature. The committee believe the course has been *wisely arranged* to the end that all working members will

obtain a broader knowledge of, and a truer love for, pure literature.

“This year three typical forms of English literature will be studied—the Essay, the Novel, and the Poem.

“The course provides for studies reaching over thirty-two weeks, and arranges for sixteen meetings of the Circle. Six evenings are devoted to novels, five to poetry, and five to essays. Under each of these general divisions are given reading lists, topics for special study and suggestive questions. The work to be done by the members consists of home reading, writing essays, and taking part in the discussions at the meetings of the Circle. Each member should do the required reading, and should come to the meetings with suggestions, helpful thoughts, questions, and quotations.

“The Syllabus, or outline of study, is particularly full of suggestions and directions. It contains not only a general outline of the entire course, but also an abundance of topics for special investigation. It ‘blazes the way’ to wide reading and serious thought. Long before the first meeting in October the Syllabus should be read and re-read by each member. The suggestions for study are neither too easy nor too difficult. Not all of them apply directly to the subjects under which they appear. They are partly designed to bring to the attention of the members, and into the discussions, many important thoughts on general literature. They are intended to help in teaching the best method of studying a Novel, an Essay, or a Poem.

“It is by carefully and attentively reading a few well-chosen books that we make progress in the direction of true culture. To make the reading of a book most profitable, we should have some object in view—the writing of an essay on the book, or discussing it with some friend, or taking part in a debate on it in a Study Circle. Most of us, before we can read a good novel or a great poem in such a manner as to make it the means of the greatest self-improvement, need to be wisely directed and guided. These truths have *been constantly in the minds of the Committee which prepared this Syllabus.*

## BOOKS THAT ARE BOOKS

“Our system provides for the study of genuine literature. Some courses of instruction with which the writer is familiar provide for studies about or concerning literature. We believe that the best way to study literature is *to study literature*. We believe that a great poem like ‘The Deserted Village’ or ‘Locksley Hall’ is just as interesting to a healthy mind as is alleged poetry of the base and trivial sort, and that great novels like ‘A Tale of Two Cities’ or ‘Jane Eyre’ can be made as interesting to the average young person as the ephemeral novels of the day which are now selling by the hundred thousand, but which will be entirely forgotten in a dozen years. And so we attempt a serious and earnest study of enduring literature—of great masterpieces—not masterpieces that might be considered ‘too good for human nature’s daily food’—but such as ‘Vanity Fair,’ ‘The Idylls of the King,’ ‘Macbeth,’ and ‘Kenilworth.’

## LITERATURE AND MORE

“The basis of our work is literary masterpieces. On this foundation we build a course of study that includes some history, politics, sociology, theology, literary criticism, and many other things. Thus, in connection with our study of ‘Elsie Venner,’ the physician of our Circle reads an essay on Heredity. When our subject is ‘The Biglow Papers,’ we read and discuss the history of the Mexican and Civil Wars. The evening with Kingsley and ‘Hypatia’ will show that our members have not only studied the author and the book, but also the period and place in which the scene of the story is laid. Thus we study literature both as an outgrowth and as an exponent of life—personal, social, and national.

“The course for the present year has been carefully arranged for those who have but little time for study, as well as for those of ample leisure and studious habits. To

do the 'required reading' will take, on an average, thirty or forty minutes daily. This much should be done by every member of the Circle. Those who have time and inclination will find that the 'suggested readings' and the 'study hints' point the way to the use of two hours or more daily, in earnest reading and research.

"To secure the best results from the course of study for the present year, every member of the Circle should own the books which constitute the required readings. [Their names and prices are given.] We believe they have been wisely selected, not only on account of the high quality of the literature they contain, but also because they can all be obtained in inexpensive editions.

"The Syllabus gives a list of 'required' or necessary readings. The study of these selections, as stated elsewhere, will take only about thirty or forty minutes daily. All of them should be read by each member. The 'Suggested' readings broaden the field of study and research, but do not lead away from the general plan. They map out a broad course of interesting study in harmony with the 'Required' readings and the 'Hints for Study.'

### AIDS TO SOUND READING

"Very few young people, and not many of any age, know the best and most approved methods of reading a poem, a novel, or an essay. Most reading is careless and desultory. Our Study Circle attempts to teach correct methods of reading masterpieces of literature. The carefully prepared Study Suggestions for each evening excite the spirit of investigation and point the way to proper methods of study. They have been arranged by those who recognize that the proper study of a poem, an essay, or a novel, should be broad and general as well as specific and minute.

"Some wise members of our Circle have methods of keeping clippings and memoranda of thoughts pertaining *to the meetings*, or to each subject or author studied. One, *at least*, uses a series of large common envelopes for the

preservation of these notes. If, at the beginning of the season, one masters and memorizes a general outline of the course, it will be found that many ideas, many bits of information, pertaining to the subjects studied, will constantly be found in miscellaneous reading and general conversation.

#### IMPORTANCE OF GOOD LEADERS

“The success of this course of study largely depends upon the efficiency of the leader or leaders. Each leader should become especially familiar with the subjects for the particular evenings of which he has charge. His preparation should cover all the required readings and all the suggested topics for study; it should go still further and enable him to suggest other topics. His research and thought should have been so broad that he will be able to grasp—and grasp quickly—any question, suggestion, or statement of fact, in harmony with the subject of the evening, that comes from the Circle. He should personally answer but few questions. His success is to be measured partly by his ability to guide and control the discussions, giving to the Circle full opportunity to answer questions or amplify suggestions. He should be an autocrat in his peculiar field, allowing no member to talk too long, and firmly stopping the discussion of a subject whenever he deems the fit moment to have arrived. It may be necessary for him to repress the over-talkative, as it will surely be his duty and pleasure to encourage the modest to take part in the debates. If he has any reason to believe that a sufficient number of the Circle will not prepare to take intelligent part in the discussion, he should, in advance, assign some of the suggested topics to other members, and ask for their special study of those topics along certain lines indicated. A poor leader may not spoil a good Circle; but a good leader is a most important force for inspiration and efficiency. Leaders should see that discussions do not degenerate into trivialities or platitudes, or wander far away from the subject of the evening. *Any leader who finds it necessary to be absent from a meeting should provide a substitute.*

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“In order to render a study Circle ideally efficient, provision should be made for one leader for the entire course. It is seldom, however, that any one member can give the time necessary to assume the leadership of every meeting. We therefore recommend that for the present year there be three leaders appointed—one for poetry, one for essays, and one for the study of the novel. Each one should commence his special preparation one or two months before the date of the first meeting of which he is to take charge. We believe that in every church of considerable size competent leaders can be found. Often the ‘elect’ person is a woman; and frequently it is some one who is not a college graduate. It is strange how few of our college-bred men or women have a genuine love for good literature.

“Every Circle should have a president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The duties of the president are obvious—the calling of meetings to order, conferring with the leaders, and presiding in the absence of the regular leader unless other arrangements have been made. One person should act as both secretary and treasurer. He should keep in touch with the writers of essays, and should secure a substitute in case a regularly appointed essayist fails to respond. He should have charge of the funds of the Circle—not usually a burdensome task. At the last Social of the season, in June, the secretary should read a paper on the study of the year. At regular meetings no minutes are read.

#### GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

“Experience has clearly demonstrated the advisability of having two essays read at each meeting. Both should be on kindred, related topics. For example, a biographical estimate of Tennyson may well be followed by a paper on ‘The Idylls of the King.’ These essays should be from fifteen to twenty-five minutes (usually not more than twenty minutes) in length. They should be carefully prepared a *sufficient length* of time before the date of the meeting at *which they are to be read*, to become seasoned. Being thus

made ready in advance, they can be read by the secretary or some other member, in case of the absence of the writer.

"We believe that a well-conducted Study Circle should hold two meetings each month, and that the sessions should begin promptly at eight o'clock, and close promptly at ten. It is proposed to hold our meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Soon after the meeting is called to order the first essay should be read, and this should be followed by a discussion of some forty minutes' duration. With or without an intermission of five minutes the second essay should be read, and a discussion or *conversazione* of forty minutes would then bring the meeting to a close. The best place to hold all meetings, including the 'Social,' is in the church parlor, or in some other suitable room in the church edifice. It should be understood that the meetings are not public, and that only members should regularly be permitted to attend. Occasional visitors, however, should be made welcome.

"The annual dues of members should be about fifty cents each, depending somewhat upon the size of the Circle. Money is necessary to defray the cost of the Syllabus or outline of study, to furnish refreshments at 'Socials,' and to pay small incidental expenses.

"We have deemed it advisable to have two or three 'Socials' during the season. Light refreshments should be served, and an Entertainment Committee should provide for games, recitations, or singing. A query box (or hat) in which may be deposited questions, suggestions, or comments, may be a feature of the 'Socials.' Bright men and women, drawn together by the desire to study genuine literature, will find that the exercises and conversation of their social evenings become more and more serious, earnest, and thoughtful."

### THE NOVEL

Here follow examples of the method in which the Novel, the Essay, and the Poem were studied.

"Some Thoughts on Novels and Novel-writing." Sug-

gestions for Study: Some best methods of novel reading and study. How can you distinguish between novels of character and novels of incident? Consider the various classes of fiction, as novels of sentiment, satire, life, and manners. The historical novel. Are the best novels "feigned history"? In what sense is a well-written novel a biography? What class of novels are bad morally? Should novelists depict scenes of vice and moral degradation? Meaning of "decadent" novels? Difference between "moral," "immoral," and "unmoral" books? Mention a few great novels containing critical and philosophical reflections intermingled with pure fiction; do you prefer them to novels of incident and thrilling situations? Do the words "fiction," "romance," and "novel," mean the same?

Suggested Readings: Encyclopedic articles on "Novel," "Fiction," and "Romance." See Poole's Index to Periodical Literature.

"'Jane Eyre' and the Novel of Sentiment." Suggestions for Study: Life of Charlotte Brontë. Her rank as a novelist; perception of character; lack of restraint; lack of humor. Is "Jane Eyre" autobiographical? In what respect does this novel mark a decided advance in the development of the novel? What is its attitude toward the social system of the day? Point out in what respect it was considered immoral. Would it be so considered to-day? Does it shadow forth a prophecy of "woman's rights"? What new and radical truth became a part of the social life of to-day? What is the greatest moral teaching of the book, as given in a short passage? Consider the purity, loveliness, and redeeming power of true love as depicted in novels. How may novel-reading become injurious? What proportion of our reading should novels be allowed? What is meant by "knowledge" literature and "power" literature? Is it better to read the great novels of many authors or all the novels of a few great authors?

Required Reading: "Jane Eyre."

Suggested Reading: Life of Charlotte Brontë.

## POETRY

"Some Thoughts on Poetry." Suggestions for Study: Elements of great poetry, originality, and perpetual charm; great subject greatly treated; correct poetic construction; vital idea coherently worked out; must quicken the emotions. Beauty of simple poetry in "Dora" and Book of Ruth. No metaphor, figure of speech, or decorative adjective in "Dora." The meaning of iambic pentameter, dactylic hexameter, etc. What is "Society Verse"? Name the ten greatest poets of all ages. Have all great poets believed in immortality? Is there such a thing as "American" poetry? The poetry which delights and sustains. Characteristics of the poetry of this century. The spiritual element in poetry. Great hymns, are they great poetry? Contemporary and universal interest in poetry. Literature of knowledge and literature of power, define each. The Bible in Tennyson and other poets. Study a poem as a whole, its plan, story, plot, vital idea, and larger teaching; note the meaning of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, also the poet's use of words.

Suggested Readings: The best short poems in the English language. Consider the real meaning and lesson of each poem studied. The secret of its music and beauty. The secret of power to move or inspire.

"Tennyson, the Man and the Poet." Suggestions for Study: An uneventful life. Development of his mind and art. From form to spirit. The poet's ideals; reverence for law; sacredness of home life. The sanctity and degradation of love. Friendship with Arthur Hallam. The story of a true friendship. The poet's conception of ideal manhood. Redemption through love. The power to feel, rather than the power to think, the safeguard in the conduct of life. The poet's treatment of patriotism, death, immortality, nature. The larger hope. The finding of God. Immortal love. Is Tennyson a great poet? Has he borrowed from earlier poets?

Suggested Reading: Life of Tennyson.

“‘Idylls of the King.’” Suggestions for Study: Sources of the poet's information. Consider the story in the poems. Are the poems a history, allegory, or parable? Is this a true epic? Treatment of chivalry, of loyalty, of kingly duty. Profounder teachings. The poem contains thought of an earlier age and also of the present age. Is the poem a “great picture of man's conflict with sin and fate”? How long did the poet work on the composition of the poems? Are they real “Idylls”? Was Arthur a real king? Consider the style of the poems, music of rhythm, beauty of diction and richness of illustrations. Consider the substance of the poems, history, allegory, conflict between the soul and false ambition, false love and other forms of sin. The character of King Arthur. What other writers have treated the Arthurian legends? Is the poet a master of blank verse?

Required Readings: “The Coming of Arthur”; “The Holy Grail”; “Lancelot and Elaine”; “The Passing of Arthur”; “Dedication.”

Suggested Readings: All the “Idylls.”

“Poetry and Poets.” Suggestions for Study: What is poetry? Its essential qualities that differentiate it from prose. Our need of poetry. Aims and methods in the study of poetry. The relation of poetry to music, painting, and oratory. Poetry gives enjoyment, and teaches duty, endurance, etc. Can love of poetry and other literature be taught? Correct methods of reading. How to study a poem.

Suggested Readings: Stedman's “Nature and Elements of Poetry.” Gummere's “Handbook of Poetics.” Articles on poetry in cyclopedias.

## THE ESSAY

“The Rise and Fall of the Essay.” Suggestions for Study: Beginnings and development of the essay in Greece, in Rome, in France. The essay in ancient times—Seneca, *Plutarch*. Its esteem among the classicists; its lapse during

the mediæval epoch; its regeneration—when, where, and how? The height of its power in England; in America; its position to-day. Modern newspaper editorials as a dominant factor; “tracts”; the mission of the essay. What is an essay? Why is Dr. Johnson’s definition inadequate? Decline of the essay—when, where, and whether temporary or permanent? The “coffee-house” and its influence.

Suggested Readings: Mabie’s “The Essay and Some Essayists” (“Bookman,” Vol. 9). Encyclopedic articles. Henley’s “A Book of English Prose.”

“Francis Bacon, the Man and the Essayist.” Suggestions for Study: Did Bacon follow any school? Did he owe anything to Montaigne? Contrast his essay on “Friendship” with that of Montaigne. Contrast his type or essay with that of his English successors. His grasp of subject; temper of feeling; purpose; trend of thought. Lobban’s opinion of the “typical essayist.” Are Bacon’s essays “typical”? What did *he* think of them? His use of Latin, and obligation to classics. His predilection for pithy, learned epigrams. His ode at thirteen an indicator of the coming man. In above essays, what striking characteristic do we find? Do you agree with the epigrams beginning “Reading maketh a full man,” etc.? Why?

Required Readings: “Of Seeming Wise”; “Of Studies.”

Suggested Readings: Life of Bacon. Life of Montaigne. Further essays by these authors. “Bacon’s Essays with Memoirs and Notes.”

## HOW TO STUDY

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### The Study of Poetry

By FRANCIS HOVEY STODDARD

CLEVER men of action, according to Bacon, despise studies, ignorant men too much admire them, wise men make use of them. "Yet," he says, "they teach not their own use, but that there is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation." These are the words of a man who had been taught by years of studiousness the emptiness of mere study. It does not teach its own usefulness, and gives its most important lesson if through it we learn that beyond lies a region from which may come a truer wisdom won by observation. This, when all is said, is the one great defect of any system of study, in that it teaches not its own use. No amount of study of the principles of barter will make a man a great merchant. One can study painting and learn all the characteristics and methods and schools of the art and yet not be able to paint a picture. No amount of study of poetry will make a man a poet. So the crafty men of action "contemn studies," and the wise men who use them look beyond them for their value. "English literature," said a noted professor not long ago, "cannot be taught"; and certain it is that even with the most advanced analytical text-book one cannot get a final satisfaction from "doing a sum" in English literature as one would work a problem in arithmetic. When applied *to the higher arts, study, deep and true as one can make it,*

leaves one the surer that there is a wisdom beyond, which cometh not by study alone.

Least of all can the deepest things in poetry be learned by mere study. Poetry deals with feeling, which study excludes. Study, indeed, seems to belong exclusively to the prose habit; it seems to be of the intellect and not of the emotions; to be of the mind and not of the spirit. We cannot write a text-book in poetry, nor can we ever in a text-book written in prose put all the secret of poetry. Beyond the text-book always lies the higher wisdom born of that which Bacon called observation, which most of us now call insight, that immediate apprehension of the highest relations which comes as a revelation in our inspired moments.

In spite of all this the study of poetry has an important function, and it is the purpose of this article to show how to use it most effectively. Poetry is one of the most difficult of all arts to study, so difficult that it has had few text-books and no complete exposition. The inquirer searching for help will find only a few hand-books, the most useful of which are these: Gummere: "Beginnings of Poetry" and "Hand-book of Poetry"; Schipper: "Metrik"; Lanier: "Science of English Verse"; Guest: "English Rhythms"; Stedman: "The Nature and Elements of Poetry." Excellent as these are he may lament when he has read them that he has found the history of poetic forms, and the technique of poetic method, where he hoped to find the secret of poetry. He will be likely to get as much help from writings on poetry that are not text-books, such as Matthew Arnold's Essays: "On Translating Homer," "Last Words on Translating Homer," "Celtic Poetry," "Introduction to the Poetry of Wordsworth"; and the "Introduction to Humphry Ward's English Poets"; Emerson's Essays: "The Poet" and "Poetry and Imagination"; Wordsworth's Introduction to the "Lyrical Ballads"; Poe's striking little essays on the art of poetry; Aristotle's "Rhetoric"; Macaulay's "Essay on Milton"; Lowell's "Essay on Dryden"; and many a passage of illuminative comment from



Milton, from Pope, from Dryden, from Coleridge and from many another. For one who has not known and read much poetry the best introduction to its study may well be the pleasurable reading of some, or of all, of these works, though remembering that such reading is not study, but only the reviewing of records of work done by others, useful mainly as a preparation for the real study which is to follow.

From all these works the student will not be likely to get a definition of poetry which will satisfy him. One may say indeed with truth that poetry is such expression as parallels the real and the ideal by means of some rhythmic form. But this is not a complete definition. Poetry is not to be bounded with a measuring line or sounded with a plummet. The student must feel after its limits as these authors have done, and find for himself its satisfactions. One can feel more of its power than the mind can define; for definitions are prose-forms of mind action, while poetry in its higher manifestations is pure emotion, outpassing prose limits. Yet one can know poetry if he cannot completely define it. The one essential element which distinguishes it from prose is rhythm. In its primal expressions this is mainly a rhythm of stresses and sounds—of accents and measures, of alliterations and rhymes. Poetry began when man, swaying his body, first sang or moaned to give expression to his joy or sorrow. Its earliest forms are the songs which accompany the simplest emotions. When rowers were in a boat the swinging oars became rhythmic, and the oarsman's chant naturally followed. When the savage overcame his enemy, he danced his war dance, and sang his war song around his camp fire at night, tone and words and gesture all fitting into harmony with the movement of his body. So came the chants and songs of work and of triumph. For the dead warrior the moan of lamentation fitted itself to the slower moving to and fro of the mourner, and hence came the elegy. In its first expression *this was but inarticulate, half action, half music, dumbly voicing the emotion through the senses; its rhythms were*

all for the ear and it had little meaning beyond the crude representation of some simple human desire and grief.

It became poetry when it put a thrill of exultation in work, of delight in victory, or of grief at loss by death, into some rhythmic form tangible to the senses. There grew up thereafter a body of rhythmic forms—lines, stanzas, accents, rhythms, verbal harmonies. These forms are the outward dress of poetry, and may rightly be the first subject of the student's study. We properly give the name of poetry to verses such as Southey's "Lodore," Poe's "Bells," or Lanier's "Song of the Chattahoochee," which do little more than sing to our ears the harmonies of sound, the ultimate rhythms of nature. Yet it is not merely the brook or the bell or the river, that we hear in the poem, but the echoing of that large harmony of nature of which the sound of the brook or the bell is only the single strain. Through the particular it suggests the universal, as does all poetry, leading through nature up to something greater, far beyond. This rhythm is best studied in poems that were written to be sung or chanted. If one could read Greek, or Anglo-Saxon, or Old High German, or the English of Chaucer's day, he could quickly train his ear to be independent of the handbooks on versification, by reading aloud, or listening as one read aloud, the "Odyssey" or the "Beowulf," or the "Nibelungen Lied" or the "Canterbury Tales." These would be better for this purpose than any modern verses, for the reason that they were intended to be sung or chanted, and so all the rhythms are real to the senses. Since the barrier of language bars out for most of us this older verse, we can read the early ballads, the lyrics of the Elizabethan time, when as yet verses spoke mainly to the ear, or some modern poems of the simpler type, such as "Evangeline" or "Hiawatha."

Such poetry, which is mainly to delight and charm the ear, is really a primal form of verse and we may properly call it the poetry of the senses. In studying it Lanier's "Science of English Verse" is a delightful companion and many minor hand-books besides those named above, such as

are found in most schools, and some of the shorter accounts of versification such as are found in works on rhetoric, will give assistance.

Yet the pathway to the mastery of the problems of meter is for each student to tread alone. The best plan is to read aloud a considerable quantity. Then the technical language of the books will lose its terrors and the simplicity of construction of good poetry will become apparent. If the student will read so much of this poetry that his senses become responsive to its music, he will no longer need a hand-book. For this purpose let him read such poems as can be sung, chanted, or spoken to the ear; such as Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," Scott's "Marmion," Browning's "Pied Piper," and "How They Brought the Good News," Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." Let him read mainly for the senses rather than for the mind, getting the reward in the quickening of life through the throbbing rhythms; then the metrical system of poetry will become as real to him as the rhythmic movements of the planets are to an astronomer. There is no other way to get a feeling for the pulsations of poetry than through this intimate acquaintance. Without this, months of reading of amphibrachs and trochees and dactyls will not avail. It should be read aloud as much as possible to make the swing of its verses perfectly clear. When it sings to us as we read, it has begun to teach the message of its rhythms.

Thus far the text-books have been pleasant companions, even when unable to give as much aid to the student as he could wish; but the fact will come to him at length that there is something more in poetry than the hand-books permit him to consider. These books deal with the forms, and most of them with the forms only. They analyze the methods, work out the meters, show how the parts are woven together, explain how the chords produce the harmonies. But just in proportion as the student becomes learned in these rhythms, and can distinguish minute or subtle variations of metrical structure, does he realize that this study teaches not its own use and that there is something beyond

which must be won by his own observation. He finds in his search for rhythmical perfection that there are poems which make little appeal to his senses, whose lines do not sing themselves through his day-dreams, which yet affect his imagination even more powerfully than the musical strains thrilled his senses. He finds that there is much more in poetry than its rhymes and jingles, that there is a rhythm greater than that of the senses. In its more complex forms poetry is rhythm of thought, leading the mind to find relations which prose may describe, but which poetry alone can recreate. There is such a thing as a prose thought and such a thing as a poetic thought. The one gives with exactness the fact as it exists, clearly, honestly, directly, and for all completed and tangible things is the natural medium of expression. The other parallels the actual with a suggestion of an ideal rhythmically consonant with the motive underlying the fact. Justice, for example, deals in prose fashion with a crime and awards the punishment which the law allows; poetic justice suggests such recompense as would come of itself in a community perfectly organized. The prose of life is honest living, a worthy endeavor to do the best one can in the world as it is; the poetry of life is the feeling for, and the striving after, the bringing of this life into harmony with a nobler living. So we rightly give the name of poetry to such verse as Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," Johnson's "London," Gray's "Elegy," Wordsworth's "Excursion," Milton's "Paradise Lost," Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," Browning's "Ring and the Book," Tennyson's "In Memoriam," which do not much stir our senses. They parallel the real with the ideal, suggesting the eternal rhythms of infinite mind as the poetry of the senses suggests the eternal rhythms of omnipotent nature.

This Poetry of the Intellect is the second great division of the poetic realm. Beyond it lies still another; for there are spiritual harmonies which the mind alone cannot compass, and which the senses alone cannot interpret. The hand-books know little of spiritual harmonies, and do not go beyond their academic classifications of lyric and epic.

and their catalogues of pentameters, hexameters, or alexandrines. But the student can for himself push his observation beyond, and come to the poetry of the higher imagination, where he can be forgetful of the mere form and disdainful of the merely logical relations, where his spirit can as it were see face to face the truth beyond the seeming. This is the poetry of the spirit, and ought to come as a revelation to the searcher. He may first find it in some pure lyric such as Shelley's "Skylark," or in some mystical fantasy such as Moore's "Lallah Rookh" or Coleridge's "Christabel," or in some story of human abnegation such as Tennyson's "Enoch Arden," or some wail of a soul in pain, as in Shelley's "Adonais," or in some outburst of exultant grief such as Whitman's "Captain, My Captain," or in some revelation of the unseen potencies close about us as in Browning's "Saul," or in some vision of the mystery of this our earthly struggle such as "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," or in some answer of the spirit to a never stilled question such as Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality." When he thus finds it he has come to poetry in its highest use. In his "Alexander's Feast" Dryden hints at two great functions of poetry in the lines:

"He raised a mortal to the skies,  
She drew an angel down."

The office of poetry is to parallel the actual with the ideal, to cast upon an earthly landscape something of a heavenly glow, to interpret earthly things in terms of the spirit. The poetry of the senses lifts a mortal to the skies, thinking the thought of one higher than itself as the poet muses, singing the song of an angelic choir in harmony with the rhythm of the verse. The poetry of the spirit brings the message of the angels down to men and makes the harmonies they speak the music of this earthly life.

The highest type of poetry lends itself perfectly to earnest and profound study. In class work it is usually better to *study poets as well as poems*, and to study thoroughly a few *works of a great master*. Poetry is essentially a synthetic

art; it unites the wandering desires of our hearts and spirits to make one single and enduring impression. Poetry speaks also the mood, the aspiration and the deepest intent of its author, so that the great poet is the one who brings us most directly to understand its art. For most student classes it is best to take a single poet for interpretation, and to study in succession a small number—say six to ten—of his works, making one, or at least, two or three, the subject of the conferences for each week. The choice of author will be dependent on many considerations and cannot here be positively advised, but one will not go astray in choosing Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Longfellow, or Whittier, or three of them, for a season's work. Intelligent direction is of great assistance in making the study definite and progressive. Choose first of all the poems which seem to have influenced men, for to move men is the final test of poetry. If there is no class, and no leader, let the student make his choice by a preliminary examination. Let him read rapidly, and for the single impression, the poems of Wordsworth whose titles seem most familiar to him as he scans them over; such as "Tintern Abbey," "Yarrow Unvisited," "Solitary Reaper," "Lucy," "We are Seven," "The Intimations of Immortality," "She was a Phantom of Delight," and a few of the lyrical ballads; then let him read Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," "Maud," "The Idylls of the King," and a few of the shorter poems; let him read Browning's "Saul," "Abt Vogler," "The Grammarian's Funeral," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," "Pippa Passes," one or two dramas, and a few of the brief poems in the volume "Men and Women." Then let him make his own list for study, taking those poems which have most stirred him, those which he remembers vividly after his reading, those which have become a part of himself. If the student makes his choice frankly and sincerely, he has, in making it, begun his study. Then let him frame for himself or get from his leader, if he has one, a list of the questions which each poem is to answer for him. If the work *be really poetry*, its study ought to give a help toward the

solution of the first great problems: "What is poetry?" and, "What is its revelation to the life of our senses, our hearts, and our souls?" We have a right to ask of each poem three questions: "How does it charm our senses?"; "How does it make the meaning of things clearer for us?"; "How does it bring to us a renewal of life?" The first question is better fitted for private study than for class investigation, the senses being delicate organs and shy in company. Let the minute matters of form and structure be gone over at home. Let the student work out the meter, the typical line, and the variations by which the poet gets his effects, the metaphors, the alliterations, the consonant and vowel harmonies. It will aid if this work be made as definite and as exact as an investigation in a scientific laboratory. But all this should be the student's home work. In the class the large divisions of the poem should be sympathetically shown, so that each student will comprehend the poem as a whole as the poet must have conceived it. Then as some one reads aloud the lines the music of the rhythms will come by assimilation rather than by analysis. Poetry parallels the real with the ideal to make a harmony before undreamed of. So in the lines sound re-echoes sound, and a subtle music but half perceived sings itself out of the moving notes.

What burden this music bears is the second question. Poetry differs from prose in that it lifts the thought so that its highest relations and suggestions are made known. We have a right therefore to parallel the prose sight with the poetic visions and to find in what the one transcends the other. If we are studying the "Idylls of the King," for instance, we may fitly ask what was the story as the poet took it, and into what he has transformed it for us. This study of the thought of the poem is an excellent subject for class work. The questions should be made definite and so grouped that sections of the class can choose one or another phase of the problem; the conferences should be so directed that a few clearly worked-out and thoroughly unified poetic *thoughts will be left in the mind of each student.*

*In all things practice may fitly supplement precept. In*

a reading circle of which one of the editors of this series was a member the poems of Tennyson were studied by a method closely resembling that advocated in this article. As a suggestion the topics and questions for one of the poems are here given. One of the members acted as leader. A brief essay reciting the history of the poem was read. The entire poem was read aloud by one of the members of the class. Then the topics given below were discussed as presented in turn by groups of students who had given especial attention to one of the topics. In the discussions the entire class joined, and at the close a very brief summing up by the leader gathered up the threads of thought.

Topic: "Locksley Hall" and "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After."

Required Readings: "Locksley Hall"; "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After"; "Lady Clara Vere de Vere"; "Sir Galahad."

Suggested Readings: In connection with the earlier poem, "Ulysses" and "The Two Voices," in connection with the later poem, "Maud"; "Memoir of Tennyson," by Lord Hallam Tennyson.

Suggestions for Study: (A) The physical basis of the poem.

Study the meter. Why called Trochaic Octameter? In what way does this meter resemble and in what way differ from Lowell's "Present Crisis," Swinburne's "Triumph of Time," Browning's "There's a woman like a dewdrop" (from "The Blot in the Scutcheon"), and Mrs. Browning's "Rhyme of the Duchess May"? Why is this meter peculiarly adapted to the sentiment of "Locksley Hall"? How does the meter differ in effect from that of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and Bryant's "The Death of the Flowers" and Tennyson's "May Queen"? Is the effect of the rhythm optimistic as opposed to the pessimism of the "Triumph of Time," and why? *Why are the lines of this poem so easily carried in the memory? What is there in the use of words which gives such*



sweetness to the verses as one reads them aloud? Has the poem for you a music of its own which haunts you like a remembered vision? Find out, if you can, something of the secret of this music. (B) The intellectual interest of the poem.

(1) Consider the meaning of difficult passages, such as "Fairy tales of science." Explain the meaning of stanzas containing the following quotations: "Smote the chord of self"; "Cursed be the social wants"; "That a sorrow's crown of sorrow"; "But the jingling of the guinea"; "Slowly comes a hungry people"; "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."

(2) How long an interval elapsed between the writing of the above two poems? Does any change in style or trend of thought indicate the lapse of time? The earlier poem was and is immensely popular. Why? Why is the later one less popular?

(3) What is the story in the poem, and in what manner is it told? How is the story continued in "Sixty Years After"? Was Locksley Hall an inland or a seashore residence, and why? Describe the surroundings from suggestions in the poems. Sum up what the hero tells of himself and his love-story. What suggestions are there regarding the characters of Amy and Edith? Is the emotional side of the hero as finely balanced as the intellectual side? What light is thrown on the character of his love by his outbursts against Amy? Would it be fair to judge of Amy and her husband by what he says of them in his first anguish? Does he ever admit that he judged them harshly? If so, do you agree with him altogether? Was it well for Amy to marry as she did? When obedience to parental wishes and love are in conflict, which should be followed? Did the hero's evil prophecies come true? Whose love do you think was the greatest, Amy's, or his, or the squire's?

(4) How does Tennyson all through the poem make it a parable of human life?

(C) *The emotional influence of the poem.* How has this poem influenced you? For many persons, Tennyson, out

of a simple love-story, has made a prophecy of ideal love. Has he for you? For many persons Tennyson made poetry out of this simple story when he paralleled the tale of earthly passion with a vision of completer life, so vivid that the pain and tragedy of this present life come to be for us but the preparation for the better life to come, as the poet sings to us that

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs  
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the  
suns."

Has he to you in like manner through this poem given a truer conception of the nature and use of poetry?

Systematic study such as that suggested above will help in answering the questions, "What charm has this poem for us?" and "How does it put a deeper meaning into the events it records?" But it is difficult to frame formal questions the answers to which will show how a poem quickens life. The influence of a poem is so much a matter of temperament and of emotion, both of the author and of the reader, that one has to feel its power rather than to work it out logically. Poetry passes beyond prose in that it quickens life by moving us to feel its nobler emotions. It will teach its own lesson to the appreciative reader, and the student who gets fully into sympathy with a great poem will have his whole life made brighter. Class work, done sympathetically and sincerely, will aid in finding the truest interpretations. Yet studies teach not their own use. The higher blessings come to us unbidden if we as little children hope for them. We shall find the highest uses of poetry in remembering always that it may at its best come to us as an

"Angel of light  
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night."

## HOW TO STUDY

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### Study of the Novel

By FRANCIS HOVEY STODDARD

IT has not till very recent years been easy to connect the notion of serious study with novel-reading. To most of us a novel is an appropriate amusement for an idle hour, and suggests a hammock on a cottage piazza in the summer days of rest. To the appointed guardians of books and of reading fiction is rather a trial. Librarians are apt to advise readers to take other literature than novels, and to be proud when they show at the end of a year that the proportion of readers of fiction is somewhat lessened. They urge the reading of history, of philosophy, of poetry, of criticism, of biography, in preference; they place special restrictions on romances; they put forth lists of useful books to draw the novel-reader back to earnest work; they oppose "serious literature" to fiction in the reports. By one founder of libraries the proposal is made that no novel less than two years old shall be bought. The general attitude seems to be that the serious study of fiction is hardly to be considered, and that the reading of stories is a habit to be tolerated rather than to be encouraged.

Even this condition of toleration, however, is something gained for fiction as compared with its earlier standing in professional circles. In former days it was rather dreaded than tolerated. The distinction between that which has not *actually happened* and that which is not in accord with truth *was not very clear* when the novel first made its appeal, and

a prejudice against it on the score of lack of verity had to be overcome. Serious objections were urged against all fiction, on the ground of the distorted views of life which it presented, on the ground of the dissatisfaction with the routine of life which it engendered, and on the ground of the emotional unrest which it brought to young minds. For reasons such as these many parents forbade their children to read any works of fiction; most teachers kept such works rigidly out of their courses; many clergymen openly condemned them. Taken as a whole, fiction, up to a very recent period, was limited in its province to the field of amusement and light diversion; to keep it in its proper place the older disciplines felt themselves in honor bound to wage continual war.

Against this feeling of distrust, which now seems to us to have been born partly of prejudice and partly of justifiable hesitancy in accepting cordially a new method of expression, fiction has certainly made some head. In quarters where it was first feared it is now enjoyed; where it was first only a means of enjoyment, it is now seriously entreated. Certain of the greater works of fiction are now approved even by the librarians; certain of the older works of fiction are now appointed to be read in schools, discussed in academies, lectured upon in universities. Even in the list of books required to be read as preparation for entrance to college three or four novels are to be found. In the courses offered in literature in colleges fiction has taken a permanent place.

Clubs study novels; social movements are based upon them or helped by them; the most serious religious problems are discussed in them. That which seemed lighter than the finger of a man's hand has come to be the whip of scorpions to modern society; now more than ever the essay, the drama, and fiction are the means of teaching the serious lessons of manners and of morals. So great a change as this is an indication that fiction has found its place in modern life. It is the purpose of this article to show what are its relations and influences and how we may best make use of the opportunities which it affords.

A good novel is a composite biography. It becomes a novel because it tells the story of a life. If veritable biography could always be written, if the story of an actual life as lived could always be told by an ideal biographer, without malice and without extenuation, with inter-play of influence and desire, of circumstance, intention and propinquitous association, the field of the novel would be taken. A few such biographies each one of us knows, told by some Boswell who builded better than he knew. But they are very few. The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word when the biographer speaks. The biography he writes becomes even less historical than most histories, far more unreal than most romances. The novel in its best estate is a real biography told by an artist who has studied his hero, who has lived with him in his days of passion, trial, or achievement, and who is unhampered in the telling of the story. The novel thus has a field as broad as life, and in common with the drama has become a great exponent, in literature, of human relations. Its scope is broader than the drama, though less absolute, for the reason that the novel can tell us the story of the quiet, unvexed soul living itself upward through the serene years, while the drama must speak of action. The crash of broken commandments, to use the happy phrase of Thomas Hardy, is as necessary to tragedy as is the clash of cymbals to a military march, while, on the other hand, life's calm deeps are but lightly skimmed in comedy.

There are whole regions of living that are essentially undramatic though palpitant with life, and of these the novel is the fit historian. It is both less and more than biography. It is less in that the final touch of reality can never be given by any artist, be he ever so skillful, to that which is after all but a creation of his fancy; it is more, in that it is a composite portrait which the artist draws for us, showing a life into whose web of existence have been woven threads to form a pattern, the secret motives of which he only can fully *know whose outlines* print themselves upon our memory. *So the novel rightly moves us, for it is begotten of desire,*

and in its highest state is a true record of emotional life. It is biography touched with emotion.

In real life the days of extreme emotion are somewhat rare, and so in fiction the novel of extreme emotion is likewise rare. Yet at the basis of all fiction is the emotion motive. One may even define a novel in terms of emotion, and say that a novel is a story of the progress of some passion and its effect upon a life. The type-form is the story of a life influenced by a passion of attraction, or a passion of aversion—by a strong hate or a strong love. Since we all love loving more than we love hating, the love novel has the broadest field of influence; and since we all love to be in a winning game, the novel of love triumphant over obstacles—the old three-decker of which Kipling sings, riding into its haven in the last chapter, and “taking tired people to the Islands of the Blest”—is the one dearest to most of us. It gives us an ideal hero and heroine; it takes us back to summer days of gladness; it keeps us young with its pictures of youth. Had the novel no other mission than this of rest and recreation, it could justify itself. The burdens of life roll off from us as we read how the hero won his victory.

To some weak minds every-day duties grow distasteful in comparison with the pleasant trials of life in fiction, and so far as this is true, novel reading works harm. But minds are more healthful than we are apt to think, and to healthful minds contact with the heroes and heroines of fiction is a stimulant. If it does nothing more for the reader than to extend the boundary of acquaintance, it has served its purpose. What a gallery of portraits of friends have the novels we have read painted for us! Strike out Trollope, Dickens, Thackeray, Dumas, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Hawthorne, and Walter Scott from our memories and how slight is the acquaintance we have left. Leaving study quite out of the reckoning, taking the novel simply as a companion for hours of rest and easy desire, who can say it has not been a solace and a charm?

*The pleasures of life gain, rather than lose, when made*

intelligent. The pleasure of looking at pictures increases with every broadening of knowledge of art, and the pleasure of traveling grows greater with study of the regions to be visited. So the intelligent study of the art of fiction gives assistance even to the page-skimmer of a summer afternoon and mightily strengthens the enjoyment of the serious reader. For such study there are two methods which appeal with unequal interest to different minds. The first is to learn what can be known of the history of the art, of its beginnings, progress, and present state, of its methods, opportunities, and limitations, and then to set the particular work in hand in its proper place in the entire recital.

The second method of study begins with a single work, and by finding its secret, gains the key to the other forms. In the one case we study inward from the general, and narrow the search to the work in hand; in the other we study outward from the single example. To the scholarly mind the second method has most attraction; and the earnest student, however he may begin, will be apt to come to it in any case as his work goes on. But there is an advantage in beginning with at least an opening glance at the history and essentials of the art. The novel as we know it belongs to the last two centuries. It is modern in its every characteristic—as in its insistence on equal rights of men and women in affairs of love, in its interest in social problems, in its interest in the individual man whatever his degree or condition, in its interest in the conduct of life—and its historical study is therefore easily within reach.

For such study there are now several excellent hand-books\* which treat of the ancestry of fiction and of its history since Defoe and Richardson made it a fact in English literature. In using all such hand-books students will be aided by adopting some system of classification so that the study can be by development of kind as well as by sequence in order of time.

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\* Dunlop: "*History of Fiction*." Warren: "*History of the Novel Previous to the Seventeenth Century*." Raleigh: "*The English Novel*." Cross: "*The Development of the Novel*." Stoddard: "*The Evolution of the English Novel*."

The universe about us is an orderly system so that any scientific study becomes of necessity an orderly grouping of facts. We distinguish species in birds and orders of families in plants; we work out the relations of constellations in astronomy; we group the metals and non-metals in chemistry; we find periods of activity in geology. The mind naturally expects to find that a family system will show itself in the productions of the mind as well as in the phenomena of nature. We have the feeling that "consciousness of kind" will come to literary works and that they can be grouped like living organisms. To a great extent this expectation on the student's part is justified, for some system of classification, more or less natural and more or less complete, is sure to come to his aid.

In fiction we find well-defined groups. A novel is an artistic biography. It has a motive, which is emotion, and an object, which is the telling of the story of a life in such an artistic fashion as shall illuminate its incidents, recreate its environment, make clear its hidden secrets, and suggest its moral. Three fields of activity are thus opened to fiction. The first is that of contemporaneous actual life, and gives us the fiction of personality. The second is that of past life, and gives us historical fiction. The third is of the unrealized life, which has no limit of date, and gives us the fiction of romance. Under these three heads—the novel of the present, the novel of the past and the novel unconditioned—may be grouped all serious fiction.

The fiction of contemporaneous life gives us the novel of manners, of satire, of problem, of purpose. The fiction of past life gives us that historical study of the real or imaginary hero of the past of which the world will never tire. The fiction of romance gives us the fascinating recital of the impossible life of a hero whose deeds make the incredible as natural as our desires, or whose soul-struggles make distress delightful.

Taking these three divisions as the beginning of study, serious work can readily be planned. The novel of contemporaneous life—that novel which in any period tells the



story of the emotional passages in the life of some hero of that day and generation—is the most common form. If the student is working alone, the best plan of study will be for him to read first the general story of the predecessors of the novel, as found in Dunlop and Warren, and then, with more care, to read the history of fiction as it has existed in English literature since the novel first found itself in the pages of Richardson, Smollett, Sterne, and Fielding.

If a group of students are working together in a club, class, or reading circle, this historical, preliminary work will be much lightened by having part of it given in lectures by the leader, and part in special studies, by members of the class, of periods, divisions, or special questions of interest. This preliminary work may properly occupy two or three weeks, at the end of which time a bird's-eye view of the whole field should have been gained by every student. Its best result will be to locate for the inquirer the works that are worth his attention in subsequent study. It is as if an explorer, entering a region totally new to him, had the fortune to climb a mountain from which the surrounding country was all in view. He could not from such quick view get the detail or know the country with any thoroughness, but he would get a knowledge of the high places and the low places, of the general trend of things, which no amount of valley exploration could give him.

In like manner, not to press the figure too far, the student, from this preliminary survey, can get a clear notion of the high places and the low places in fiction's history, of the trend of things, and of the works worth minute study. Having completed this the student, if he be alone, or the leader, or better still, the whole class if there is a club, should choose a series of master-works to be read and studied. These works must be chosen, of course, on information and belief, as the lawyers say, as to their logical sequence, but they will be well chosen if the list be confined to works that have reputation and are in each case representative of an *idea*.

*Each book taken should stand for a personality. There*

is a wealth of choice—Pamela, Roderick Random, Clarissa Harlowe, Tom Jones, Dr. Primrose, Emma, Hawkeye, Jane Eyre, Pickwick, David Copperfield, Adam Bede, Romola, Hester Prynne, Becky Sharp, Lorna Doone, Penderennis—and every life is told by a biographer untrammelled by social pride or family feeling. Let the class choose half a dozen typical personages whose biographies as told in fiction they would like to study. These may be taken in chronological order as far as possible, but the basis of selection should be the vitality of the hero, or heroine, remembering that since the novel of personality is a biography its hero must live for us in its pages.

In studying these examples, it is better to follow a definite line of inquiry. Let the student ask for himself, or the leader ask for him, specific questions—as to the type of character represented, as to the clearness with which it is painted, as to the growth of the art of story-telling shown in the successive examples, as to the honesty and truth of the tale that is told, and as to the worth of the life that is there unfolded. The last question especially we have a perfect right to ask in studying the novel of personality. Life should be fruitful, and any study of a life, even in a novel, must be a study of one made fruitful through experience, or of one whose failures show us how a better life might have been lived. It is not that the great novel teaches a moral so much as that it is moral. All the issues of things are so brought out that the harmony of true living is shown even in the failures. We have a right to ask, also, if the novelist's art is just and strong. If such a series can be chosen as shall answer these questions, their study will educate as well as inform the student.

The historical novel presents a somewhat simpler field, and it is for most students better to take it up before undertaking the subdivisions of the personality novel—the novels of satire, introspection, purpose, and problem. Scott is still the great master of the lighter historical novel. After reading him a series of half a dozen subsequent examples down to the latest success of the present day, will fairly illustrate

the delightful mingling of real and ideal which gives the historical novel its charm. The student may well remember that a poor historical novel is neither history nor fiction, and that only a few works in this field are masterpieces worthy of serious study. Yet he will not keenly feel the need of a guide until he reaches the third great division, that of the romantic novel.

I have called this the novel of the unrealized life, for its motive is always the desire of an unsatisfied soul exploring the dim days of the past, or the misty regions beyond the physical, mental, or spiritual horizon, in search of something which the present day and the present experience has failed to give. Romantic fiction is as old as time and as new as to-morrow. Its illusiveness and intangibility make it one of the most difficult of all fields of study, as it is one of the most fascinating of all fields of intellectual pleasure. It is best approached, even by the serious student, through the gateway of desire. In romance let him study what he loves, and the lesson of the search will come unasked.

These general studies will probably make up about half of the year's work. To follow them may come the special, detailed, and critical—though, if to be beneficial, always appreciative—examination of a few of the greater works. When possible make this also the study of a great author, for the personality of a biographer molds the biography, be it a real or an imaginary one. Take also, when possible, the greatest work of a novelist, and give all the sessions of a definite period—say a week or a fortnight—to this one work. If the circle is large, the range of study may well be large also, separate groups of students taking the various phases of the subject. For illustration a study of "Vanity Fair," made by a reading circle of which one of the editors of this series was a member, is appended, but only as a suggestion. If the group is small the study can be correspondingly intensive and special. But it will be, in either case, productive of best results when made most definite.

*With such a scheme of work a class can in a year read with reasonable thoroughness all of the history of fiction that*

is necessary for the understanding of the existing state of the art; can get a clear idea of the various methods of novel-writing, their possibilities and opportunities; and can get an intimate acquaintance with a dozen masterpieces. And ever afterward fiction will be reality to such students.

“William Makepeace Thackeray—a Biographical and Critical Estimate.” Suggestions for Study: Thackeray as a man and as a man of letters; as the castigator of social shams. Compare with Dickens. The quality of his humor and pathos. Is he a great historical novelist? His boyhood and college days; life-story; artistic ambitions; first literary venture. His attractive and peculiar personality. Does he “put himself into his books”? In what way is he a moralist, or “week-day preacher”? Consider him as an artist, satirist, and poet. Did he attempt to reform society? Had he deep insight into the human heart, like Shakespeare? Was he a cynic? Does he attempt to describe men and women as they actually are?

Suggested Reading:

“Vanity Fair—A Novel of Social Satire.” Suggestions for Study: Is “Vanity Fair” a realistic novel? Are the villains too villainous and the good people too “goody-goody”? Make a brief character sketch of Amelia, Becky, and Crawley. Which is the most powerful scene in the novel? Becky seems thoroughly bad; can anything be said in her defense? Are all the minor characters consistently and completely depicted? Is this a book of which every word should be read? In what way is this a story of social satire? Is there any authentic history in the novel? Is it a story without a hero? Has it a heroine? Is the magnificent Becky immoral or only unmoral? Note her skill as a player of the “bluff” game. Does Thackeray correctly describe the foibles and shams of fashionable life? Does he picture the pathos of human life? Does he not seem to forget that some women are tender, true, and intellectual as well; and that some men are brave and upright? Define idealism; realism. Is Thackeray an idealist or a realist? *How does he display supreme art in the treatment of Becky?*

Required Reading: "Vanity Fair."

Suggested Reading: Trevyllian's Life of Thackeray.

The three following studies are selected from the list given by Dr. Richard G. Moulton, in his "Four Years of Novel Reading," an account of the systematic study of fiction by an English circle.

"Martin Chuzzlewit." Points to be noted (suggested by Professor R. G. Moulton)—(1) Four different types of selfishness—Old Martin, Young Martin, Antony, and Pecksniff. (2) Four different types of unselfishness—Mary, Mark Tapley, Old Chuffey, and Tom Pinch.

Debate: That the two swindles in the story (Scadder's Land Office and the English Insurance Company) are inconceivable.

Essays: (1) Is Mark Tapley's character overdrawn? (2) Changes in the characters of the book from Selfishness to Unselfishness.

Difficulty Raised: How could Tom Pinch go so long undeceived in Pecksniff?

"Elsie Venner." Points to be noted (suggested by T. L. Brunton)—(1) Note the effect of inherited tendencies on the actions of individuals. (2) The effect of accidental circumstances (e.g., disease affecting a parent) on the character of the offspring.

Debate: How far was Bernard Langdon justified in punishing Abner Briggs and his dog, considering that they were both acting according to their natures, which they had partly inherited from their ancestors, and which were partly developed by the circumstances in which they were brought up?

Essay: How far is the character of Elsie Venner to be regarded as a description of fact? and how far as a parable?

"Jane Eyre." Points to be noted (suggested by Dr. A. S. Percival)—(1) The book is neither artistic nor realistic, yet it possesses an engrossing interest. On what does the interest depend? (2) The characters: Jane Eyre, a woman of little human sympathy, upright by rule rather than from *any impulsive love* of right. Note the vulgarity of her *dis-trust of Rochester* during her engagement. Rochester, a

woman's false type of manliness. He has a certain nobility, though his roughness and coarseness detract from the strength of his character. St. John Rivers, a selfish prig; his uprightness based purely on hope of future reward.

Debate: Can Rochester's conduct to Jane Eyre be justified?

Essay: The character of the author as revealed in the book.

## HOW TO STUDY

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### Reading Clubs for Women

By CHARLES F. RICHARDSON

SOME helpful hints on social literary work for women—hints which apply, for the most part, equally well to men, or to the literary clubs composed of both sexes—may well be reprinted here, from “The Christian Union,” in lieu of further words of my own. “In every community,” says that journal, “there are intelligent women, with considerable leisure at their command, who have a desire to be helpful, and in the same community there is a class of young women who need intellectual stimulus and guidance. How shall the two be brought together so that the supply shall meet the demand? Newspapers, magazines, and public libraries all serve an admirable purpose in the intellectual life of the community, but they are not sufficient. What is needed is personal influence and power, and this is just the element which intelligent women are able to supply. Almost every village, certainly every larger town, contains a number of recent graduates from high schools and seminaries, who are not able, for one reason or another, to complete their school education by a full college course. Now to girls of this class a woman of tact and intelligence can render the greatest possible service by helping them to preserve the habits of study they have already formed, to keep alive the intellectual interest and curiosity that have been awakened in them, and by giving them just that impulse *which shall keep them drinking continually at the running*

streams of knowledge. The training of the best schools fails unless it emphasizes the importance of continual and systematic study as the habit of a lifetime, but it is just this which large numbers of bright and promising graduates from the higher schools fail to carry away with them. They go home from their last term with a latent desire for fuller knowledge, but that desire is not strong enough to carry them through the interruptions home life brings to a regular course of study, and what they need is an impulse from without, and the guidance of some mature and trained mind. Any intelligent woman can find a noble work for herself by opening her doors to girls of this class, and providing in her home a kind of post-graduate course for them. No study and no teaching is so delightful as that which is full of the element of personality, in which teacher and scholars meet on a social basis, and as friends mutually interested in the same work, in which the methods are entirely informal and conversational, and the result the largest and freest discussion of the subject. An experiment of this kind need not be a heavy task on the teacher either in time or effort. A class may be formed which shall meet for an hour once or twice a week, taking any subject for study that has vital connection with life. Nothing could be more stimulating and interesting, for instance, than a study of the age of Pericles in Greek history, taking Curtius as a historical basis, and reading in connection an account of the Greek poets of that period, . . . to which may be profitably added discussions on the Grecian art of the day, and chapters from such books as Mahaffy's "Social Life among the Greeks." Half a dozen other historical epochs are quite as interesting and fruitful; that of Louis XIV., for instance, in French history; that of Elizabeth in English history, the richest and most fascinating epoch in the development of the English race. No subject will be more entertaining in itself or open up so many paths of private reading and study as English literature. An excellent plan *would be to take Stopford Brooke's "Primer of English Literature" as a connecting thread of study, and with it as a*

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guide to make the grand tour of English literature, taking each great author in his turn and making such study of his life and work as would be within the power of an ordinarily intelligent person. Different authors may be assigned to different members of the class, who shall specially study up and give account of them, so that the principal facts of their lives, the special qualities of their work, and the particular impulse which they imparted to their age may be made the possession of the whole class. Then there is the great field of art, which by the aid of the admirable text-books now being published may be intelligently and profitably traversed by those who have no opportunities for technical knowledge, but who desire to know art in its historical aspects, and to be able by knowledge of its historical development to understand the school of the present day. These hints will suggest a multiplicity of topics that might with the utmost profit be studied in this way. Every woman who desires to make the experiment can easily settle the question of what subject she shall take, by consulting her own culture, her own tastes, and the needs of those whom she wishes to help. The special knowledge to be imparted is not of so much value as the habit of study, which is to be strengthened and made continuous in the life of the student."

In the formation of classes like those indicated above—in which reading aloud must of course play a large part—or of Shakespeare clubs, or social literary organizations in general, two things should never be forgotten; that almost any kind of a beginning is better than none; and that the constitution and by-laws of the society, if it is deemed necessary to have any, should be of the simplest character possible.

Edward Everett Hale says that, in his experience as a parish minister, he looks back on the work which the reading-classes have done with him, with more satisfaction than on any other organized effort in which he has shared for the education of the young. His most important hints for the *management* of such classes are as follows:

*"It seems desirable that a class shall be of such a size that*

free conversation may be easy. If the number exceeds thirty, the members hardly become intimate with each other, and there is a certain shyness about speaking out in meeting. The size of the room has some effect in this matter.

“I think that in the choice of the subject the range may easily be too large. It seems desirable that the members of the class shall know at the beginning what their winter's work is to be so specifically that they can adjust to it their general readings. Even the choice of novels for relaxation, or the selection of what they will read and what they will not, in newspapers, magazines, and reviews, depends on this first choice of subject. The leader of the class should give a good deal of time to preparation. The more he knows, the better of course; but all that is absolutely necessary is that he shall keep a little in advance of the class and shall be willing to work and read. A true man or woman will, of course, confess ignorance frankly. I should rather have in a leader good practical knowledge of books of reference and the way to use public libraries than large specific knowledge of the subject in hand. Of course it would be better to have both. And I think a class is wise in leaving to its leader the selection of the topic. Granting these preliminaries, I should urge, and almost insist, that no one should attend the class who would not promise to attend to the end. Nothing is so ruinous as the presence of the virgins who have no oil in their vessels, and are in the outer darkness before the course is half done. I think it is well to agree in the beginning on a small fee—a dollar, or half a dollar—which can be expended in books of reference, or supper, or charity, or anything else desirable. The real object of the fee is weeding out unreliable members.

“Every member should have a note-book and pencil, and those who do not take notes should be expelled. What is heard at such classes, with no memorandum to connect it with after work, goes in at one ear and out at the other.

“To make sure that each member takes notes, it is well to keep one class journal. At the end of each meeting *assign the making up of this journal to some one of the class.*

selected by accident. The length of this journal should be limited—say to a single page of a writing-book. Otherwise the ambitious members vie with each other in making them long, which is in no way desirable. All you want is the merest brief of the work done at each meeting. . . .

“The leader will very soon get a knowledge of what the different members of the class can and will do. Indeed, the consideration of what they want to do will become an important part of his arrangements. He should remember that they are all volunteers, that it is no business of his to drive up a particular laggard to his work, but rather to make the class as profitable as he can for all.”

## WHY TO STUDY

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### Five Evidences of an Education

By NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER \*

"IF you had had children, sir," said Boswell, "would you have taught them anything?" "I hope," replied Dr. Johnson, "that I should have willingly lived on bread and water to obtain instruction for them; but I would not have set their future friendship to hazard for the sake of thrusting into their heads knowledge of things for which they might not perhaps have either taste or necessity. You teach your daughters the diameters of the planets, and wonder when you have done that they do not delight in your company." From which it appears that Dr. Johnson, by a sort of prolepsis, was moved to contribute to the discussion of one of the vexed questions of our time. Who is the educated man? By what signs shall we know him?

"In the first golden age of the world," Erasmus observes, in his "Praise of Folly," "there was no need of these perplexities. There was then no other sort of learning but what was naturally collected from every man's common-sense, improved by an easy experience. What use could there have been of grammar, when all men spoke the same mother-tongue, and aimed at no higher pitch of oratory than barely to be understood by each other? What need of logic, when they were too wise to enter into any dispute? Or what occasion for rhetoric, where no difference arose to require any laborious decision?" Surely, in con-

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\* President of Columbia University.

trasting this picture of a far-off golden age with our present-day strenuous age of steel, we must be moved to say, with the Preacher, "in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

It is only two hundred and fifty years ago that Comenius urged, with ardent zeal, the establishment in London of a college of learned men who should bring together in one book the sum total of human wisdom, so expressed as to meet the needs of both the present and all future generations. This scheme for a Pansophia, or repository of all learning, proved very attractive in the seventeenth century, for it easily adjusted itself to the notions of a period which looked upon learning as a substantial and measurable quantity, to be acquired and possessed. Unfortunately this quantitative ideal of education, with its resultant processes and standards, is still widely influential, and it tempts us to seek the evidences of an education in the number of languages learned, in the variety of sciences studied, and generally in the quantity of facts held in the memory reserve. But, on the other hand, any serious attempt to apply quantitative standards to the determination of education quickly betrays their inadequacy and their false assumptions. If to be educated means to know nature in systematic fashion and to be able to interpret it, then nearly every man of letters, ancient or modern, must be classed with the uneducated. Or if to be educated means to have sympathetic, almost affectionate, insight into the great masterpieces of art and of literature, then innumerable great men of action, who have fully represented the ideals and the power of their time and who manifested most admirable qualities of mind and of character, were uneducated. The case is even worse to-day. A host of knowledges compass us about on every side and bewilder by their variety and their interest. We must exclude the many to choose the one. The penalty of choice is deprivation; the price of not choosing is shallowness and incapacity. The quantitative method of estimating education breaks down, then, of its own weight. A true standard is to be sought in some other direction.

A full analysis of the facts of life as they confront us to-day would show, I feel confident, that all knowledges and all influences are not on a single plane of indifference toward the human mind that would be educated. All parts of the spiritual machine are not mutually interchangeable. There are needs to be met and longings to be satisfied that will not accept any vicarious response to their demands. The scientific, the literary, the æsthetic, the institutional, and the religious aspects of life and of civilization, while interdependent, are yet independent of each other, in the sense that no one of them can be reduced to a function of another or can be stated in terms of another. Therefore each of these five aspects must, I think, be represented in some degree in every scheme of training which has education for its end. Nevertheless this training when it arrives at education will not suffer itself to be measured and estimated quantitatively in terms either of science, of letters, of art, of institutions, or of religion. It will have produced certain traits of intellect and of character which find expression in ways open to the observation of all men, and it is toward these traits or habits, not toward external and substantial acquisition or accomplishment, that one must turn to find the true and sure evidences of an education, as education is conceived to-day.

First among the evidences of an education I name correctness and precision in the use of the mother-tongue. Important as this power is, and is admitted to be, it is a comparatively new thing in education. The modern European languages took on educational significance only when the decentralization of culture began at the close of the Middle Ages. So late as 1549 Jacques de Bellay supported the study of French with the very mild assertion that it is "not so poor a tongue as many think it." Mulcaster, writing a little later, found it necessary to tell why his book on education was put in English rather than in Latin, and to defend the vernacular when he referred to its educational usefulness. Melancthon put German in a class with Greek and Hebrew, and contrasted all three unfavorably with

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Latin. Indeed it was not until the present German Emperor plainly told the Berlin School Conference of 1890 that a national basis was lacking in German education; that the foundation of the gymnasium course of study must be German; that the duty of the schoolmasters was to train the young to become Germans, not Greeks and Romans, and that the German language must be made the center around which all other subjects revolved, that a revision of the official school program was brought about that made place for the really serious study of the German language and literature. And to-day, where the influence of the English universities and of not a few American colleges is potent, the study of English is slight and insignificant indeed. The superstition that the best gate to English is through the Latin is anything but dead.

But for the great mass of the people the vernacular is not only the established medium of instruction, but, fortunately, also an important subject of study. A chief measure of educational accomplishment is the ease, the correctness, and the precision with which one uses this instrument.

It is no disrespect to the splendid literatures which are embodied in the French and the German tongues, and no lack of appreciation of the services of those great peoples to civilization and to culture, to point out that of modern languages the English is easily the first and the most powerful, for "it is the greatest instrument of communication that is now in use among men upon the earth." It is the speech of an aggressive people among whom individual liberty and personal initiative are highly prized. It falls short, no doubt, of the philosophical pliability of the Greek and of the scientific ductility of the German; but what is there in the whole field of human passion and human action that it cannot express with freedom and with a power all its own? Turn "Othello" into German or compare the verse of Shelley or of Keats with the graceful lines of some of their *French contemporaries*, and learn the peculiar power of the *English speech*. In simple word or sonorous phrase it is

unequaled as a medium to reveal the thoughts, the feelings, and the ideals of humanity.

One's hold upon the English tongue is measured by his choice of words and by his use of idiom. The composite character of modern English offers a wide field for apt and happy choice of expression. The educated man, at home with his mother-tongue, moves easily about in its Saxon, Romanic, and Latin elements, and has gained by long experience and wide reading a knowledge of the mental incidence of words as well as of their artistic effect. He is hampered by no set formulas, but manifests in his speech, spoken, and written, the characteristic powers and appreciation of his nature. The educated man is of necessity, therefore, a constant reader of the best written English. He reads not for conscious imitation, but for unconscious absorption and reflection. He knows the wide distinction between correct English on the one hand, and pedantic, or as it is sometimes called, "elegant," English on the other. He is more likely to "go to bed" than to "retire," to "get up" than to "arise," to have "legs" rather than "limbs," to "dress" than to "clothe himself," and to "make a speech" rather than to "deliver an oration." He knows that "if you hear poor English and read poor English you will pretty surely speak poor English and write poor English," and governs himself accordingly. He realizes the power and place of idiom and its relation to grammar, and shows his skill by preserving a balance between the two in his style. He would follow with intelligent sympathy the scholarly discussions of idiom and of grammar by Professor Earle and would find therein the justification of much of his best practice. In short, in his use of his mother-tongue he would give sure evidence of an education.

As a second evidence of an education I name those refined and gentle manners which are the expression of fixed habits of thought and of action. "Manners are behavior and good breeding," as Addison said, but they are more. *It is not without significance that the Latin language has*



but a single word (*mores*) both for usages, habits, manners, and for morals. Real manners, the manners of a truly educated man or woman, are an outward expression of intellectual and moral conviction. Sham manners are a veneer which falls away at the dampening touch of the first selfish suggestion. Manners have a moral significance, and find their basis in that true and deepest self-respect which is built upon respect for others. An infallible test of character is to be found in one's manners toward those whom, for one reason or another, the world may deem his inferiors. A man's manners toward his equals or his superiors are shaped by too many motives to render their interpretation either easy or certain. Manners do not make the man, but manners reveal the man. It is by the amount of respect, deference, and courtesy shown to human personality as such that we judge whether one is on dress parade or whether he is so well-trained, well-educated, and so habitually ethical in thought and action that he realizes his proper relation to his fellows and reveals his realization in his manners. As Kant insisted more than a century ago, a man exists as an end in himself and not merely as a means to be arbitrarily used by this or that will; and in all his actions, whether they concern himself alone or other rational beings, he must always be regarded as an end. True manners are based upon a recognition of this fact, and that is a poor education indeed which fails to inculcate the ethical principle and the manners that embody it.

As a third evidence of an education I name the power and habit of reflection. It is a frequent charge against us moderns, particularly against Americans, that we are losing the habit of reflection and the high qualities which depend upon it. We are told that this loss is a necessary result of our hurried and busy lives, of our diverse interests, and of the annihilation of space and time by steam and electricity. The whole world and its happenings are brought to our very doors by the daily newspaper. Our attention leaps *from Manila to Peking*, from Peking to the Transvaal, and *from the Transvaal to Havana*. We are torn by conflicting

or unconnected emotions, and our minds are occupied by ideas following each other with such rapidity that we fail to get a firm and deep hold of any one of the great facts that come into our lives. This is the charge which even sympathetic critics bring against us.

If it be true—and there are some counts in the indictment which it is difficult to deny—then one of the most precious evidences of an education is slipping from us, and we must redouble our efforts to keep fast hold upon it. For an unexamined life, as Socrates unceasingly insisted, is not worth living. The life which asks no questions of itself, which traces events back to no causes and forward to no purposes, which raises no vital issues of principle, and which seeks no interpretation of what passes within and without, is not a human life at all; it is the life of an animal. The trained and the untrained mind are perhaps in sharpest contrast at this very point. An armory of insights and convictions always ready for applications to new conditions, and invincible save by deeper insights and more rational convictions, is a mark of a trained and educated mind. The educated man has standards of truth, of human experience, and of wisdom, by which new proposals are judged. These standards can be gained only through reflection. The undisciplined mind is a prey to every passing fancy and the victim of every plausible doctrinaire. He has no permanent forms of judgment which give him character.

Renan was right when he held that the first condition for the development of the mind is that it shall have liberty; and liberty for the mind means freedom from the control of the unreasonable, and freedom to choose the reasonable in accordance with principle. A body of principles is a necessary possession of the educated man. His development is always with reference to his principles, and proceeds by evolution, not revolution.

Philosophy is, of course, the great single study by which the power of reflection is developed until it becomes a habit, but there is a philosophic study of literature, of politics, of *natural science*, which makes for the same end. The ques-

tion how, whose answer is science, and the question why, whose answer is philosophy, are the beginnings of reflection. A truly educated man asks both questions continually, and as a result is habituated to reflection.

As a fourth evidence of an education I name the power of growth. There is a type of mind which, when trained to a certain point, crystallizes, as it were, and refuses to move forward thereafter. This type of mind fails to give one of the essential evidences of an education. It has perhaps acquired much and promised much; but somehow or other the promise is not fulfilled. It is not dead, but in a trance. Only such functions are performed as serve to keep it where it is; there is no movement, no development, no new power or accomplishment. The impulse to continuous study, and to that self-education which are the conditions of permanent intellectual growth, is wanting. Education has so far failed of one of its chief purposes.

A human mind continuing to grow and to develop throughout a long life is a splendid and impressive sight. It was that characteristic in Mr. Gladstone which made his personality so attractive to young and ambitious men. They were fired by his zeal and inspired by his limitless intellectual energy. To have passed from being "the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories" in 1838 to the unchallenged leadership of the anti-Tory party in Great Britain a generation later, and to have continued to grow throughout an exceptionally long life, is no mean distinction; and it is an example of what, in less conspicuous ways, is the lot of every mind whose training is effective. Broadened views, widened sympathies, deepened insights, are the accompaniments of growth.

For this growth a many-sided interest is necessary, and this is why growth and intellectual and moral narrowness are eternally at war. There is much in our modern education which is uneducational because it makes growth difficult, if not impossible. Early specialization, with its attendant limited range both of information and of interest, is *an enemy of growth*. Turning from the distasteful before it

is understood is an enemy of growth. Failure to see the relation of the subject of one's special interest to other subjects is an enemy of growth. The pretense of investigation and discovery before mastering existent knowledge is an enemy of growth. The habit of cynical indifference toward men and things and of aloofness from them, sometimes supposed to be peculiarly academic, is an enemy of growth. These, then, are all to be shunned while formal education is going on, if it is to carry with it the priceless gift of an impulse to continuous growth. "Life," says Bishop Spalding in an eloquent passage, "is the unfolding of a mysterious power, which in man rises to self-consciousness, and through self-consciousness to the knowledge of a world of truth and order and love, where action may no longer be left wholly to the sway of matter or to the impulse of instinct, but may and should be controlled by reason and conscience. To further this process by deliberate and intelligent effort is to educate"—and, I add, to educate so as to sow the seed of continuous growth, intellectual and moral.

And as a fifth evidence of an education I name efficiency, the power to do. The time has long since gone by, if it ever was, when contemplation pure and simple, withdrawal from the world and its activities, or intelligent incompetence was a defensible ideal of education. To-day the truly educated man must be, in some sense, efficient. With brain, tongue, or hand he must be able to express his knowledge and so leave the world other than he found it. Mr. James is simply summing up what physiology and psychology both teach when he exclaims: "No reception without reaction, no impression without correlative expression—this is the great maxim which the teacher ought never to forget. An impression which simply flows in at the pupil's eyes or ears, and in no way modifies his active life, is an impression gone to waste. It is physiologically incomplete. It leaves no fruits behind it in the way of capacity acquired. Even as mere impression it fails to produce its proper effect upon the memory; for, to remain fully among the *acquisitions of the latter faculty*, it must be wrought into the

whole cycle of our operations. Its motor consequences are what clinch it." This is just as true of knowledge in general as of impressions. Indefinite absorption without production is fatal both to character and to the highest intellectual power. Do something and be able to do it well; express what you know in some helpful and substantial form; produce, and do not everlastingly feel only and revel in feelings—these are counsels which make for a real education and against that sham form of it which is easily recognized as well-informed incapacity. Our colleges and universities abound in false notions, notions as unscientific as they are unphilosophical, of the supposed value of knowledge, information, for its own sake. It has none. The date of the discovery of America is in itself as meaningless as the date of the birth of the youngest blade of grass in the neighboring field; it means something because it is part of a larger knowledge-whole, because it has relations, applications, uses; and for the student who sees none of these and knows none of them, America was discovered in 1249 quite as much as it was in 1492.

High efficiency is primarily an intellectual affair, and only *longo intervallo* does it take on anything approaching a mechanical form. Its mechanical form is always wholly subordinate to its springs in the intellect. It is the outgrowth of an established and habitual relationship between intellect and will, by means of which knowledge is constantly made power. For knowledge is not power, Bacon to the contrary notwithstanding, unless it is made so, and it can be made so only by him who possesses the knowledge. The habit of making knowledge power is efficiency. Without it education is incomplete.

These five characteristics, then, I offer as evidences of an education—correctness and precision in the use of the mother-tongue; refined and gentle manners, which are the expression of fixed habits of thought and action; the power *and habit of reflection*; the power of growth; and efficiency, *or the power to do*. On this plane the physicist may meet

with the philologist and the naturalist with the philosopher, and each recognize the fact that his fellow is an educated man, though the range of their information is widely different and the centers of their highest interests are far apart. They are knit together in a brotherhood by the close tie of those traits which have sprung out of the reaction of their minds and wills upon that which has fed them and brought them strength. Without these traits men are not truly educated and their erudition, however vast, is of no avail; it furnishes a museum, not a developed human being.

It is these habits, of necessity made by ourselves alone, begun in the days of school and college, and strengthened with maturer years and broader experience, that serve to show to ourselves and to others that we have discovered the secret of gaining an education.

## HOW TO READ

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### How to Read

By EDWARD EVERETT HALE

FOR reading, the first rules, I think, are: Do not read too much at a time; stop when you are tired; and, in whatever way, make some review of what you read, even as you go along.

Capel Lofft says, in quite an interesting book, which plays about the surface of things without going very deep, which he calls "Self-Formation," that his whole life was changed, and indeed saved, when he learned that he must turn back at the end of each sentence, ask himself what it meant, if he believed it or disbelieved it, and, so to speak, that he must pack it away as part of his mental furniture before he took in another sentence. That is just as a dentist jams one little bit of gold-foil home, and then another, and then another. He does not put one large wad on the hollow tooth, and then crowd it in all at once. Capel Lofft says that this *re-flection*—going forward as a serpent does, by a series of backward bends over the line—will make a dull book entertaining, and will make the reader master of every book he reads, through all time. For my part, I think this is cutting it rather fine, this chopping the book up into separate bits. I had rather read as one of my wisest counselors did; he read, say a page, or a paragraph of a page or two, more or less; then he would look across at the wall, and consider the author's statement, and fix it on his

mind, and then read on. I do not do this, however. I read half an hour or an hour, till I am ready, perhaps, to put the book by. Then I examine myself. What has this amounted to? What does he say? What does he prove? Does he prove it? What is there new in it? Where did he get it? If it is necessary in such an examination, you can go back over the passage, correct your first impression, if it is wrong, find out the meaning that the writer has carelessly concealed, and such a process makes it certain that you yourself will remember his thought or his statement.

I can remember, I think, everything I saw in Europe which was worth seeing, if I saw it twice. But there was many a wonder which I was taken to see in the whirl of sight-seeing, of which I have no memory, and of which I cannot force any recollection. I remember that at Malines—what we call Mechlin—our train stopped nearly an hour. At the station a crowd of guides were shouting that there was time to go and see Rubens's picture of —, at the church of —. This seemed to us a droll contrast to the cry at our stations, "Fifteen minutes for refreshments!" It offered such æsthetic refreshment in place of carnal oysters that purely for the frolic we went to see. We were hurried across some sort of square into the church, saw the picture, admired it, came away, and forgot it—clear and clean forgot it! My dear Laura, I do not know what it was about any more than you do. But if I had gone to that church the next day, and had seen it again, I should have fixed it forever on my memory. Moral: Renew your acquaintance with whatever you want to remember. I think Ingham says somewhere that it is the slight difference between the two stereoscopic pictures which gives to them, when one overlies the other, their relief and distinctness. If he does not say it, I will say it for him now.

I think it makes no difference how you make this mental review of the author, but I do think it essential that, as you pass from one division of his work to another, you should *make it somehow*.

*Another good rule for memory is indispensable, I think,*



—namely, to read with a pencil in hand. If the book is your own, you had better make what I may call your own index to it on the hard white page which lines the cover at the end. That is, you can write down there just a hint of the things you will be apt to like to see again, noting the page on which they are. If the book is not your own, do this on a little slip of paper, which you may keep separately. These memoranda will be, of course, of all sorts of things. Thus they will be facts which you want to know, or funny stories which you think will amuse some one, or opinions which you may have a doubt about. Suppose you had got hold of that very rare book, Veragas's "History of the Pacific Ocean and its Shores"; here might be your private index at the end of the first volume:

Percentage of salt in water, 11; Gov. Revillagigedo, 19; Caciques and potatoes, 23; Lime-water for scurvy, 29; Enata, Kanaka, 42; Magelhaens *vs.* Wilkes, 57; Coral insects, 72; Gigantic ferns, 84, etc., etc., etc.

Very likely you may never need one of these references; but if you do, it is certain that you will have no time to waste in hunting for them. Make your memorandum, and you are sure.

Bear in mind all along that each book will suggest other books which you are to read sooner or later. In your memoranda note with care the authors who are referred to of whom you know little or nothing, if you think you should like to know more, or ought to know more. Do not neglect this last condition, however. You do not make the memorandum to show it at the Philogabblian; you make it for yourself; and it means that you yourself need this additional information.

Whether to copy much from books or not? That is a question; and the answer is: "That depends." If you have but few books, and much time and paper and ink; and if you are likely to have fewer books, why, nothing is nicer and better than to make for use in later life good extract-books to your own taste, and for your own purposes. But *if you own your books*, or are likely to have them at com-

mand, time is short, and the time spent in copying would probably be better spent in reading. There are some very diffusive books, difficult because diffusive, of which it is well to write close digests, if you are really studying them. When we read John Locke, for instance, in college, we had to make abstracts, and we used to stint ourselves to a line for one of his chatty sections. That was good practice for writing, and we remember what was in the sections to this hour. If you copy, make a first-rate index to your extracts. They sell books prepared for the purpose, but you may just as well make your own.

You see I am not contemplating any very rapid or slapdash work. You may try that in your novels, or books of amusement, if you choose, and I will not be very cross about it; but for the books of improvement, I want you to improve by reading them. Do not "gobble" them up so that five years hence you shall not know whether you have read them or not. What I advise seems slow to you, but if you will, any of you, make or find two hours a day to read in this fashion, you will be one day accomplished men and women. Very few professional men, known to me, get so much time as that for careful and systematic reading. If any boy or girl wants really to know what comes of such reading, I wish he would read the life of my friend George Livermore, which our friend Charles Deane has just now written for the Historical Society of Massachusetts. There was a young man, who when he was a boy in a store began his systematic reading. He never left active and laborious business; but when he died he was one of the accomplished historical scholars of America. He had no superior in his special lines of study; he was a recognized authority and leader among men who had given their lives to scholarship.

I have not room to copy it here, but I wish any of you would turn to a letter of Frederick Robertson's near the end of the second volume of his letters, where he speaks of this very matter. He says he read, when he was at Oxford, *but sixteen* books with his tutors. But he read them so

that they became a part of himself, "as the iron enters a man's blood." And they were books by sixteen of the men who have been leaders of the world. No bad thing to have in your blood and brain and bone the vitalizing element that was in the lives of such men.

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# THE STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

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The following suggestions and observations are taken from *The Merchant of Venice*, edited by HOMER B. SPRAGUE, and published by SILVER, BURDETT & COMPANY.

[From J. M. Buchan, *Inspector of High Schools, Ontario, Canada.*]

WITH all classes of pupils alike, the main thing to be aimed at by the teacher is to lead them clearly and fully to understand the meaning of the author they are reading, and to appreciate the beauty, the nobleness, the justness, or the sublimity of his thoughts and language. Parsing, the analysis of sentences, the derivation of words, the explanation of allusions, the scansion of verse, the pointing-out of figures of speech, the hundred and one minor matters on which the teacher may easily dissipate the attention of the pupil, should be strictly subordinated to this great aim. . . . It is essential that the mind of the reader should be put *en rapport* with that of the writer. There is something in the influence of a great soul upon another, which defies analysis. No analysis of a poem, however subtle, can produce the same effect upon the mind and heart as the reading of the poem itself.

Though the works of Shakespeare and Milton and our other great writers were not intended by their authors to serve as text-books for future generations, yet it is unquestionably the case that a large amount of information may be imparted and a very valuable training given, if we deal with them as we deal with Homer and Horace in our best schools. Parsing,

grammatical analysis, the derivation of words, prosody, composition, the history of the language, and to a certain extent the history of the race, may be both more pleasantly and more profitably taught in this than in any other way. It is advisable for these reasons, also, that the study of these subjects should be conjoined with that of the English literature. Not only may time be thus economized, but the difficulty of fixing the attention of flighty and inappreciative pupils may more easily be overcome.

[From F. G. Fleay's "*Guide to Chaucer and Spenser.*"]

No doubtful critical point should ever be set before the student as ascertained. One great advantage of these studies is the acquirement of a power of forming a judgment in cases of conflicting evidence. Give the student the evidence; state your own opinion, if you like, but let him judge for himself.

No extracts or incomplete works should be used. The capability of appreciating a whole work, as a whole, is one of the principal aims in æsthetic culture.

It is better to read thoroughly one simple play or poem than to know details about all the dramatists and poets. The former trains the brain to judge of other plays or poems; the latter only loads the memory with details that can at any time be found, when required, in books of reference.

For these studies to completely succeed, they must be as thorough as our classical studies used to be. No difficult point in syntax, prosody, accidence, or pronunciation; no variation in manners or customs; no historical or geographical allusions,—must be passed over without explanation. This training in exactness will not interfere with, but aid, the higher aims of literary training.

[From Dr. Johnson. 1765.]

Let him that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the greatest pleasure that the *drama can give*, read every play, from the first scene to the last, *with utter negligence* to all his commentators. When his fancy

is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue, and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

[*From Professor Brainerd Kellogg.*]

The student ought, first of all, to read the play as a pleasure; then to read over again, with his mind upon the characters and the plot; and, lastly, to read it for the meanings, grammar, etc.

1. THE PLOT AND STORY OF THE PLAY.

- (a) The general plot;
- (b) The special incidents.

2. THE CHARACTERS: Ability to give a connected account of all that is done and most of what is said by each character in the play.

3. THE INFLUENCE AND INTERPLAY OF THE CHARACTERS UPON EACH OTHER.

- (a) Relation of A to B, and of B to A;
- (b) Relation of A to C and D.

4. COMPLETE POSSESSION OF THE LANGUAGE.

- (a) Meanings of words;
- (b) Use of old words, or of words in an old meaning;
- (c) Grammar;
- (d) Ability to quote lines to illustrate a grammatical point.

5. POWER TO REPRODUCE, OR QUOTE.

- (a) What was said by A or B on a particular occasion;
- (b) What was said by A in reply to B;
- (c) What argument was used by C at a particular juncture;
- (d) To quote a line in instance of an idiom or of a peculiar meaning.

## 6. POWER TO LOCATE.

- (a) To attribute a line or statement to a certain person on a certain occasion;
- (b) To cap a line;
- (c) To fill in the right word or epithet.

[From Blaisdell's "*Outlines for the Study of English Classics.*"]

The following summary of points to be exacted . . . may prove useful:—

## I.—POINTS RELATIVE TO SUBSTANCE.

- 1. A general knowledge of the purport of the passages, and line of argument pursued.
- 2. An exact paraphrase of parts of the whole, producing exactly and at length the author's meaning.
- 3. The force and character of epithets.
- 4. The meaning of similes, and expansions of metaphors.
- 5. The exact meaning of individual words.

## II.—POINTS WITH REGARD TO FORM.

- 1. General grammar rules; if necessary, peculiarities of English grammar.
- 2. Derivations: (1) General laws and principles of derivations, including a knowledge of affixes and suffixes. (2) Interesting historical derivation of particular words.

## III.—THE KNOWLEDGE OF ALL ALLUSIONS.

## IV.—A KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH PARALLEL PASSAGES AND ILLUSTRATIONS AS THE TEACHER HAS SUPPLIED.

[From Professor Wm. Taylor Thom.]

To understand Shakespeare, we must understand his medium of thought, his language, as thoroughly as possible. For this, *study is necessary*; and one notable advantage of the thorough *study of this medium* is that the student becomes unconsciously

more or less imbued with Shakespeare's turn of thought while observing his turn of phrase. . . .

For the class-room, a non-æsthetic, preliminary study is best. And this may be accomplished in the following way: By studying carefully the Text,—the words themselves and their forms; their philological content, so far as such content is essential to the thought; and the grammatical differences of usage, then and now; by observing accurately the point of view of life (*Weltanschauung*) historically and otherwise, as shown in the text; by taking what may be called the actor's view of the personages of the play; and, finally, by a sober and discriminating æsthetic discussion of the characters, of the principles represented by those characters, and of the play in its parts and as a whole.

I. With regard to the *words themselves* and their *forms*: There is no doubt that Shakespeare's words and word-combinations need constant and careful explanation in order for the pupil to seize the thought accurately or even approximately. Here, as elsewhere, Coleridge's dictum remains true: "In order to get the full sense of a word, we should first present to our minds the visual image that forms its primary meaning." . . .

II. But this does not exhaust the interest of the words themselves. They are frequently so full of a particular use and meaning of their own that they have evidently been chosen by Shakespeare on that account, and can only serve fully their purpose of conveying his meaning when themselves comprehended. This opens up to the pupil one of the most interesting aspects of words—their function of embalming the ideas and habits of a past generation, thus giving little photographic views, as it were, of the course of the national life. Thus, a new element of interest and weird reality is added when we find that "And like a rat *without a tail*" is not stuffed into the witch-speech in *Macbeth* merely for rhyme's sake (*Mac.* I, iii, 9). It is doubtful if anything brings so visibly before the mind's eye the age, and therefore the proper point of view, of Shakespeare as the accurate following-out of these implied views of life, these old popular beliefs contained in his picturesque language. . . .

III. Difficulties consisting in the forms of words have been already mentioned; but they constitute in reality only a part,



perhaps the least part, of the *grammatical* impediment to our apprehending Shakespeare clearly. There is in him a splendid superiority to what we call grammar which entails upon us more or less of close, critical observation of his word-order, if we would seize the very thought. Thus Lady Macbeth speaks of Macbeth's "flaws and starts" as "impostors *to* true fear" (III, iv, 64). Here, if we understand "to" in its ordinary meaning, we lose entirely the fine force of its use by Shakespeare, "*compared to* true fear," and fail to see how subtly Lady Macbeth is trying to persuade Macbeth that there is no cause for fear, that he is not truly "afeard," but merely hysterical and unbalanced; and, failing in that, we fail in part to realize the prodigious nerve and force she was herself displaying, though vainly, for Macbeth's sake. So, too, a few lines farther on, Macbeth's fine saying, "Ere humane statute purged the *gentle* weal," becomes finer when we see that "gentle" means for us "gentled," or "and made it gentle" (III, iv, 76). But for the apprehension of such, to us, unwonted powers in our noble mother tongue, we must study: *work*, that is the word for it. We appreciate Shakespeare, as we do other things, when he has cost us something. . . .

IV. With such preliminary and coincident study, the pupil prepares herself for that wider sweep of vision called for by the *views of life and of the universe* expressed or implied by the *dramatis personæ* themselves. The habit of mind thus acquired enables her to comprehend quickly the notions of God, of life, of creation (*Weltanschauung*) found in ante-protestant times; and she is ready to sympathize with humanity, no matter as to age, or race, or clime. . . .

V. Another prolific source of the realization of Shakespeare's conception is obtained by suggesting the *actor's view* to the pupil. There is much quickening of sympathy in representing to ourselves the look, the posture, emphasis, of the character who speaks. The same words have a totally different force according as they are pronounced; and it is like a revelation to a pupil sometimes to learn that a speech, or even a word, was *uttered thus and not so*. . . .

VI. Now, all this is preliminary work and should lead up

to the *æsthetic* appreciation of Shakespeare's characters; and to that end, real conceptions, right or wrong, are essential. Let it be distinctly understood: all study of words, of grammatical construction, of views of life peculiar to an age past, of bodily posture and gesture—all are the preparation for the study of the characters themselves; that is, of the play itself; that is, of what Mr. Hudson calls the "Shakespeare of Shakespeare." If the student does not rise to this view of Shakespeare, she had better let Shakespeare alone and go at something else. In studying the lives of such men as Hamlet or Lear, and of such women as Lady Macbeth or Cordelia, it is of the utmost consequence that the attention of the pupil be so directed to their deeds and words, their expression and demonstration of feeling,—to the things, further, which they omit to say or do,—as to make the conception of personality as strong as possible. . . .

For a class of boys or girls, I hold that the most effectual and rapid and profitable method of studying Shakespeare is for them to learn one play as thoroughly as their teacher can make them do it. Then they can read other plays with a profit and a pleasure unknown and unknowable, without such a previous drill and study.

Applying now these principles, if such they can be called, my method of work is this. One of the plays is selected, and after some brief introductory matter the class begins to study. Each pupil reads in turn a number of lines, and then is expected to give such explanations of the text as are to be found in the notes, supplemented by her own knowledge. She has pointed out to her such other matters also as may be of interest and are relevant to the text.

When the play has been finished or when any character disappears from the play,—as Polonius in *Hamlet*, Duncan in *Macbeth*, the Fool in *King Lear*,—the class have all those passages in the play pointed out to them wherein this character appears or mention is made of him; and then, with this, Shakespeare's, biography of him before their eyes, they are required to write a *composition*—bane of pupils, most useful of teachers' auxiliaries—on this character, without other *æsthetic assistance* or hints than they may have gathered from the teacher in the

course of their study. This is to be *their* work, and to express *their* opinions of the man or the woman under discussion, and is to show how far they have succeeded in retaining their thoughts and impressions concerning the character, and how far they wish to modify them under this review. They are thus compelled to realize what they do and do not think; what they do and do not know; in how far the character does or does not meet their approval, and why. That is, the pupils are compelled to pass judgment upon themselves along with the Shakespeare character. . . .

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## OUTLINES FOR THE STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE.

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THE following Outlines and Suggestions for the study of *The Merchant of Venice* are based on the Booklovers Edition of Shakespeare, and are designed to serve as a general model for the study of the plays in connection with the "helps" contained in the Booklovers Edition.

I. Read carefully the "Argument," following the Preface to the volume *The Merchant of Venice*.

II. Read the play in order to learn its plot and incidents as well as for the pleasure of the reading.

III. Read the play again for a fuller knowledge of the plot and acquaintance with the characters, and for a deeper appreciation of the literary charm and value of the drama.

IV. Take up the serious study of the play, first using the Questions—in themselves a Study Method—at the close of the volume.

- (1) Consider the general questions at the beginning and at the end of this Study Method.
- (2) Carefully study each Act separately, using as a basis the Questions on each Act.
- (3) Give attention to the meaning of unusual or obsolete words, using the glossary.
- (4) Endeavor to ascertain the sense of difficult passages, using the Critical and the Explanatory Notes.
- (5) It will be seen that the Questions bring up historical, biographical, bibliographical, ethical, and other considerations. Matters of dramatic construction are left to the discrimination of the student or of the study circle.

- (6) The use of the Questions, with their suggestive implications, will lead to a still more thorough study of the play and to a careful reading of the Preface, the Critical Comments, and the Explanatory Notes. The student will find in these "helps" the expert knowledge and the mature opinions of the greatest Shakespearian scholars on every important matter pertaining to the play.
- (7) In the Index volume will be found descriptions and commentaries relating to the characters. The student should become familiar with this Index.
- (8) The volume containing the life of Shakespeare should be read by all who study the plays. In the same volume are chapters on "Shakespeare, the Man," by Walter Bagehot; "Self Revelation of Shakespeare," by Leslie Stephen; "The English Drama," by Richard Grant White; and "Culmination of the Drama in Shakespeare," by Thomas Spencer Baynes. A more interesting and instructive collection of Shakespearian literature in like compass is not to be found.

V. The special articles in this booklet on the study of literature and the study of Shakespeare should be read and reread. Near the close of the essay by Hamilton Wright Mabie will be found a character analysis of *The Merchant of Venice* that is interesting in itself and may serve as a model for a character analysis of other plays.

VI. In the chapter in this booklet on the study of English literature will be found unique general methods for the study of each play.

VII. In the Questions that accompany each play in the Booklovers Edition will be found suggestive subjects for essays.

VIII. The student of any play should read it aloud—in whole or in part—and should memorize the choicest passages.

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